

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE

TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS

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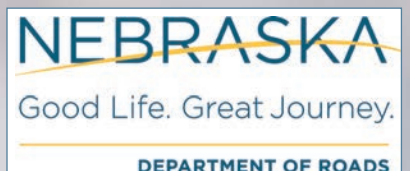
Justine Wong-Orantes

## ROAD TO A REPEAT

Seniors want to bring NU  
first back-to-back titles



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## SENIORS LEADING HUSKER VOLLEYBALL TEAM DOWN THE ROAD TO A REPEAT

**WHEN THIS YEAR'S SENIOR VOLLEYBALL CLASS CAME OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL THEY WERE RANKED AS THE NO. 1 RECRUITING CLASS IN THE COUNTRY BY PREPVOLLEYBALL.COM.**

Granted a couple members have transferred but the core nucleus of Amber Rolfzen, Kadie Rolfzen and Justine Wong-Orantes are now preparing for their senior season of college along with junior Kelly Hunter, who redshirted as a freshman.

Much the way they ended their final years of high school, they and their Husker teammates are starting their final season of collegiate volleyball as the preseason No. 1 team in the country after returning five starters from last year's national championship squad.

Both Rolfzens and Wong-Orantes were All-Americans last season, while Hunter was honorable mention.

In addition to the senior class, former All-American Brianna Holman is now eligible after sitting out a year and graduate Andie Malloy also has a year of eligibility after an All-Conference senior season at Baylor.



NU's Road to a Repeat won't be easy.

In the year after Nebraska's other national championships, the Huskers have never repeated or even made it back to the championship match.

But the Huskers also have never returned quite the amount of talent and experience as this season.

With such high expectations, Coach John Cook and the players have set the theme of Dream Bigger for this season.

The bigger refers to bigger goals and aspirations than just one national championship.

Bigger shouldn't be a surprise with this class as the Rolfzens have been larger than life since committing to Cook back in seventh grade and then leading NU to two-consecutive Elite Eight showings before breaking through last season with the championship.

In the opening week of the season Nebraska swept 2015 runner-up Texas and pre-season No. 10 Florida in straight sets.

It was an amazing start, but there is much more to accomplish during the next three and a half months for the seniors on this year's squad to be satisfied.

*See pages 30-31 for a special tribute to NU punter Sam Foltz, who was killed in an auto accident on July 23 in Merton, Wisconsin.*



## NEBRASKA'S FUTURE FOOTBALL OPPONENTS

### 2017 SCHEDULE

| Date  | Opponent          | Location             |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 9/2   | Arkansas State    | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 9/9   | Oregon            | Eugene, Ore.         |
| 9/16  | Northern Illinois | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 9/23  | Rutgers           | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 9/30  | Illinois          | Champaign, Ill.      |
| 10/7  | Wisconsin         | Madison, Wis.        |
| 10/14 | Ohio State        | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 10/28 | Purdue            | West Lafayette, Ind. |
| 11/4  | Northwestern      | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 11/11 | Minnesota         | Minneapolis, Minn.   |
| 11/18 | Penn State        | State College, Pa.   |
| 11/24 | Iowa              | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 12/2  | Big Ten Game      | TBD                  |

### 2018 SCHEDULE

| Date  | Opponent       | Location           |
|-------|----------------|--------------------|
| 9/1   | Akron          | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 9/8   | Colorado       | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 9/15  | Troy           | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 9/22  | Michigan       | Ann Arbor, Mich.   |
| 9/29  | Purdue         | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 10/6  | Wisconsin      | Madison, Wis.      |
| 10/13 | Northwestern   | Evanston, Ill.     |
| 10/20 | Minnesota      | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 11/3  | Ohio State     | Columbus, Ohio     |
| 11/10 | Illinois       | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 11/17 | Michigan State | Lincoln, Neb.      |
| 11/23 | Iowa           | Iowa City, Ia.     |
| 12/1  | Big Ten Game   | Indianapolis, Ind. |

### 2019 SCHEDULE

| Date  | Opponent          | Location             |
|-------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 8/31  | South Alabama     | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 9/7   | Colorado          | Boulder, Colo.       |
| 9/14  | Northern Illinois | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 9/21  | Illinois          | Champaign, Ill.      |
| 9/28  | Ohio State        | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 10/5  | Northwestern      | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 10/12 | Minnesota         | Minneapolis, Minn.   |
| 10/26 | Indiana           | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 11/2  | Purdue            | West Lafayette, Ind. |
| 11/16 | Wisconsin         | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 11/23 | Maryland          | College Park, Md.    |
| 11/29 | Iowa              | Lincoln, Neb.        |
| 12/7  | Big Ten Game      | Indianapolis, Ind.   |

### 2020 SCHEDULE

| Date                         | Opponent         | Location      |
|------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 9/5                          | TBA              | TBD           |
| 9/12                         | Cincinnati       | Lincoln, Neb. |
| 9/19                         | Central Michigan | Lincoln, Neb. |
| Remainder of Games TBA Later |                  |               |



THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED

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**The next Huskers Illustrated Edition recapping the Fresno State game and previewing Wyoming will mail on Sept. 6 due to Labor Day.**

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BY DARREN IVY

Coming off the 2015 NCAA volleyball championship season, NU is Dreaming Bigger in 2016 and wants to become the first Nebraska team to repeat as champions.

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### A STROLL DOWN RASMUSSEN ROAD

BY BUTCH RASMUSSEN

Joe Orduna was a standout running back for the Huskers from 1967-70. Orduna now goes by Joseph but has fond memories of playing days for NU.

## FEATURES

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### ROAD TO A REPEAT

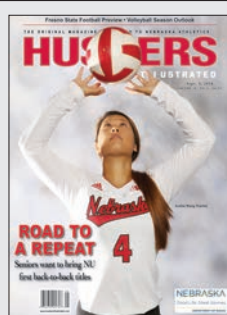
BY BOB HAMAR

The Nebraska volleyball team is fresh off its fourth national championship, but seniors Kadie and Amber Rolfsen and Justine Wong-Orantes want more in 2016 and will have plenty of help to try and accomplish the feat.

### 2016 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

| DATE     | OPPONENT      | SITE                 | TIME      | TV/SCORE |
|----------|---------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|
| SEPT. 3  | FRESNO STATE  | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | 7P.M.     | BTN      |
| SEPT. 10 | WYOMING       | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | 11A.M.    | ESPN2    |
| SEPT. 17 | OREGON        | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | 2:30P.M.  | ABC      |
| SEPT. 24 | @NORTHWESTERN | EVANSTON, ILLINOIS   | 6:30P.M.  | BTN      |
| OCT. 1   | ILLINOIS      | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | 2:30P.M.  | TBA      |
| OCT. 15  | @INDIANA      | BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA | 2:30P.M.  | TBA      |
| OCT. 22  | PURDUE        | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | TBA       | TBA      |
| OCT. 29  | @WISCONSIN    | MADISON, WISCONSIN   | 6P.M.     | ABC/ESPN |
| NOV. 5   | @OHIO STATE   | COLUMBUS, OHIO       | 7P.M.     | ABC/ESPN |
| NOV. 12  | MINNESOTA     | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | 6:30 P.M. | BTN      |
| NOV. 19  | MARYLAND      | MEMORIAL STADIUM     | TBA       | TBA      |
| NOV. 25  | @IOWA         | IOWA CITY, IOWA      | TBA       | TBA      |

ALL GAMES ARE CST



## ON THE COVER

Senior Justine Wong-Orantes and her Nebraska teammates are looking to do something no other NU volleyball team has ever done before and that is winning back-to-back national titles. The Road to a Repeat won't be easy, but the Huskers have a stacked squad who are ready to try and accomplish the feat.

HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED PHOTO BY MITCH OTTO

## 2016 Schedule

### VERT Challenge at Eugene, Oregon

|         |         |        |
|---------|---------|--------|
| Aug. 26 | Florida | W, 3-1 |
| Aug. 27 | Texas   | W, 3-0 |

### Nebraska Invite at Lincoln, Nebraska

|         |              |           |
|---------|--------------|-----------|
| Sept. 2 | Iowa State   | 6 p.m.    |
| Sept. 3 | Oregon State | 2:30 p.m. |

### Lobo Classic at Albuquerque, N.M.

|          |                 |           |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Sept. 8  | Montreal (Exh.) | 6 p.m.    |
| Sept. 9  | Arkansas        | 6 p.m.    |
| Sept. 10 | New Mexico      | 8:30 p.m. |

### Ameritas Challenge at Devaney Center

|          |               |           |
|----------|---------------|-----------|
| Sept. 16 | Montana State | Noon      |
| Sept. 16 | Gonzaga       | 7:30 p.m. |
| Sept. 17 | Creighton     | 8 p.m.    |

|           |                   |              |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| Sept. 23  | at Michigan       | 6 p.m.       |
| Sept. 24  | at Michigan State | TBA          |
| Sept. 28  | at Illinois       | 7:30 p.m.    |
| Oct. 1    | Ohio State        | 7 p.m.       |
| Oct. 7    | Indiana           | 7 p.m.       |
| Oct. 9    | Purdue            | 2 p.m.       |
| Oct. 14   | at Ohio State     | 5 p.m.       |
| Oct. 16   | at Maryland       | Noon         |
| Oct. 21   | Wisconsin         | 8 p.m.       |
| Oct. 23   | Minnesota         | 1 p.m.       |
| Oct. 28   | Illinois          | 6 p.m.       |
| Oct. 29   | Northwestern      | 7 p.m.       |
| Nov. 4    | at Penn State     | 7 p.m.       |
| Nov. 5    | at Rutgers        | 6 p.m.       |
| Nov. 9    | Iowa              | 6 p.m.       |
| Nov. 12   | at Indiana        | 6 p.m.       |
| Nov. 16   | Penn State        | 7 p.m.       |
| Nov. 19   | at Iowa           | 6:30 p.m.    |
| Nov. 23   | at Minnesota      | 8 p.m.       |
| Nov. 26   | Michigan          | 7 p.m.       |
| Dec. 1-3  | NCAA 1st, 2nd Rds | TBD          |
| Dec. 9-10 | NCAA Regionals    | - TBD        |
| Dec. 15   | NCAA Semis        | at Columbus, |
| Dec. 17   | NCAA Finals       | at Columbus  |



# DREAMING BIGGER



## 2016 Nebraska Volleyball Roster

| No. | Name                 | Position       | Ht.  | Yr. | Hometown (Previous School)                 |
|-----|----------------------|----------------|------|-----|--|
| 2   | Mikaela Foecke       | MB/OH          | 6-3  | So. | West Point, Iowa (Holy Trinity Catholic)   |
| 3   | Kelly Hunter         | Setter         | 5-11 | Jr. | Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South) |
| 4   | Justine Wong-Orantes | Libero         | 5-6  | Sr. | Cypress, Calif. (Los Alamitos)             |
| 5   | Amber Rolfzen        | Outside Hitter | 6-3  | Sr. | Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South) |
| 6   | Kadie Rolfzen        | Outside Hitter | 6-3  | Sr. | Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-La Vista South) |
| 7   | Sydney Townsend      | Libero         | 5-8  | Jr. | Lincoln, Neb. (Pius X)                     |
| 8   | Brooke Smith         | Setter         | 5-10 | So. | Weatherford, Texas (Azle)                  |
| 9   | Andie Malloy         | Outside Hitter | 6-2  | Sr. | Allen, Texas (Baylor) (Lovejoy)            |
| 10  | Hunter Atherton      | Setter         | 5-11 | Fr. | Prospect, Ohio (Dublin Coffman)            |
| 11  | Kenzie Maloney       | DS/Libero      | 5-8  | So. | Louisville, Ky. (Assumption)               |
| 13  | Briana Holman        | Middle Blocker | 6-1  | Jr. | DeSoto, Texas (LSU) (Cedar Hill)           |
| 17  | Annika Albrecht      | Outside Hitter | 6-0  | Jr. | North Aurora, Ill. (Home Schooled)         |
| 22  | Tiani Reeves         | Outside Hitter | 6-1  | RFr | Gothenburg, Neb. (Gothenburg6              |
| 26  | Lauren Stivrins      | Middle Blocker | 6-4  | Fr. | Scottsdale, Ariz. (Chaparral)              |
| 27  | Olivia Boender       | Outside Hitter | 6-2  | So. | Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)                    |

Coaches: John Cook, Dani Busboom-Kelly, Chris Tamas, Jen Tamas

Director of Operations: Lindsay Peterson

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# ROAD TO A REPEAT

## HUSKERS DREAMING BIGGER IN 2016

Story by Bob Hamar • Photos by Darren Ivy and Reggie Ryder

If Nebraska coach John Cook were to write a book, he says he would call it “Dream big.” But for the 2016 Huskers, dreaming big isn’t enough. They’re dreaming bigger this year. “Dream bigger” is the theme for this year’s team. That’s because the Huskers lived their dream of a national title last season, the fourth for the program and the third for Cook.

Now the goals are to not only win another national title – and no Husker team has ever won two in a row – and a Big Ten championship. Last year, the Huskers were 32-4 overall. Their 17-3 mark for the conference was only good enough for second behind Minnesota.

So these Huskers are out to accomplish something that hasn’t been done before, and that’s what they have been pointing for all summer long as they head down the road to a repeat.

“I always say to do something that’s never been done before, you have to do something you’ve never done before,” junior setter Kelly Hunter said. “I think already this summer we’ve done things that haven’t been done before. so I think we’re off to a great start.”

Take the way the Huskers ended their summer program. Cook gushed about what they had done, but left it to the players to explain.

On the last day of those workouts, the players – loaded down with weight vests – and ran the stairs in the Devaney Center 14 times, once each for every team in the conference, including Nebraska.

But they weren’t done yet.

“Then we ran another one because the Big Ten, you have to grind every single day,” senior middle blocker Amber Rolfzen said. “Playing in the Big Ten, you have a tough match every single night. Once you get to the tournament, you’re really well

# Expect the Unexpected and Drive Carefully.

prepared. So we took the vest off, did one more up. That was like our running portion.

“And then we went down stairs and had a watermelon eating contest ... People ate it in like two bites. It was really impressive.”

Cook wasn't there to see it, but he loved what his players did.

“The way they ended it on Saturday was historic in my opinion from a motivational and inspirational point of view,” he said.

No doubt the Huskers are inspired. Cook has put that “dream bigger” goal out in front of them, just like he did a year when the Final Four was in Omaha.

“Just like last year, in January we had the goal of ‘Destination Omaha,’ and we put that out there,” Husker senior outside hitter Kadie Rolfzen said. “This year we’re doing the same exact thing. We know what we want to do. We know where we want to be. I think that’s big for a team. You know what your end goal is going to be. Now we have to figure out day by day what we’re going to do to get better to reach our goal.”

No one doubts that the talent is there. Kadie Rolfzen was a first-team All-American a year ago while Amber Rolfzen was a second-teamer. Senior libero Justine Wong-Orantes was a third-team All-American and Hunter – who was named by Cook as the lone captain for 2016 – was honorable mention.

Plus, Brianna Holman is eligible to play this season. The 2014 first-team All-American middle blocker sat out last season after transferring from LSU.

The Huskers also added All-Big 12 first-teamer Andie Malloy, a graduate student who transferred in from Baylor.

Sophomore Mikaela Foecke, a 6-3 outside hitter, made her mark a year ago by being named MVP of the Final four.

Defensive specialists Sydney Townsend and Kenzie Maloney are back along with outside hitter Annika Albrecht who saw considerable action in the back row last season.

The Huskers lost outside hitter Kelsey Fien and middle blocker Cecilia Hall from last year’s team. Neither was an All-American, but both played key roles in the championship run.

“Kelsey Fien had some phenomenal matches and (Hall) was huge in the NCAA the last two years,” Cook said. “That was a great senior class. There are so many challenges going into this so I don’t know how you can compare.”

But with most of the regulars back and Holman eligible to play, the 2016 team may appear stronger than last year’s squad.

“I think if you look on paper, sure, but there is so much more that goes into it,” Cook said. “This team is going to have to learn how it’s going to play together and learn their roles. We have a lot of options we have to look at in lineups and we have some big shoes to fill.”

The players understand that too.

“It’s a new season, new year, new team,” Wong-Orantes said.

“We have a lot of returners, but it’s essentially a brand new team with the addition of freshmen and Andie and Bri being able to play. We can have that in the back of our minds, but I think now we just have to focus.”

It will be a challenge from the very first weekend when the Huskers face Florida and Texas in the VERT Challenge in Eugene, Oregon.

The Big Ten season starts Sept. 23 with three-straight matches at Michigan, at Michigan State and at Illinois.

Cook said the Big Ten is harder to win than a national championship because it’s over 10 weeks.

“Again the schedule is very random and some teams are going to have easier draws

than others, but to do it over 10 weeks and come out on top might be tougher than winning a three-week tournament where you only play six matches,” Cook said.

The players seem to understand what’s ahead of them. The road to a repeat is not going to be easy, but then nothing was easy all summer either.

The NCAA made one big change that will have an affect on the NCAA Tournament. The regionals will now be held at home sites of the top four seeds. That makes the regular season that much more important.

“It was a sense of urgency for us all summer, especially now that the top four teams get to host the regionals,” Hunter said. “Coach has put that in our minds too. We’ve been really good since I’ve been here of talking about our goals and being vocal about them.”

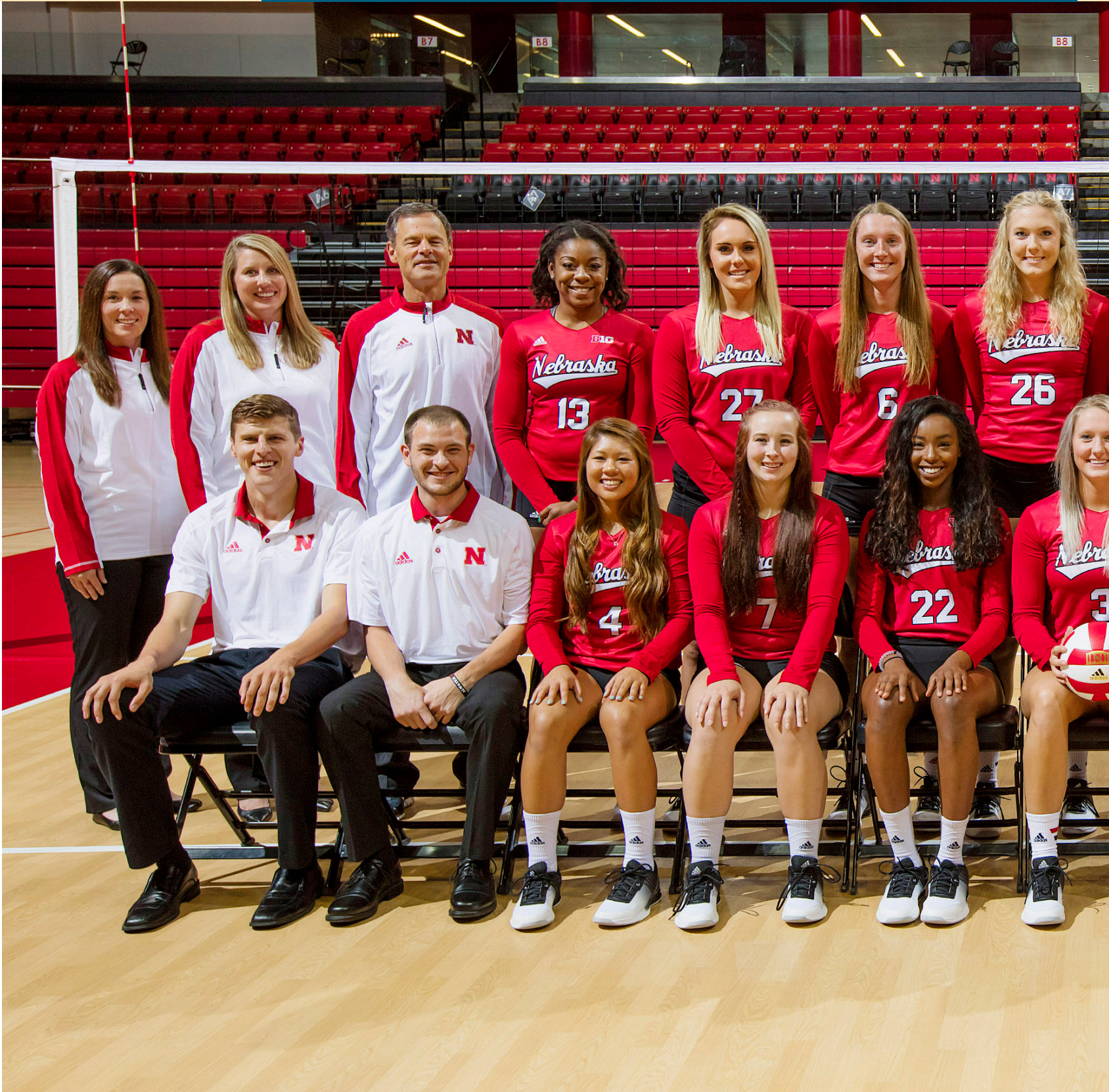
Those goals were Cook’s way of inspiring and motivating his players over the summer. He didn’t want his players to go on cruise control after winning a national title.

“We have to set the bar higher for them to go after something and motivate them,” Cook said. “That’s how we roll.”





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# Seniors





# Seniors look to end careers the way they came in

Story by Bob Hamar • Photos by Mitch Otto & Joe Mixan

The 2013 Nebraska recruiting class was rated the top in the nation.

With players like Kadie and Amber Rolfzen and Kelly Hunter, all from Papillion-La Vista South, it was expected to form the nucleus for the Huskers' future.

It did, but maybe not the way it was expected.

Now the Rolfzens and Justine Wong-Orantes are the only three seniors left from that recruiting class. Three players have transferred and Hunter took a redshirt season two years ago, so she's only a junior when it comes to eligibility.

Hunter is the lone captain on this year's team, but the Rolfzens and Wong-Orantes have come a long ways.

"I just have so much respect for those guys, what they've accomplished, what they've worked through," Cook said. "Now that they're seniors, I told them they're going to drive the bus this team is on. I think they've really earned the respect and the right to be leaders in this program."

All three are returning All-Americans for the Huskers as they head down the road to a repeat. Kadie Rolfzen was a first-team pick, Amber a second-team pick and Wong-Orantes a third teamer.

Redshirt freshman Tiana Reeves said watching Kadie Rolfzen play and practice is a learning experience.

"Kadie is a great player, a great leader," Reeves said. "She's just someone that you look up to. It's amazing to get to play with her every single day. It's also good to see how she reacts to all the pressure on her all the time. She's just a really good person to look up to."

Wong-Orantes has a hard time believing she's headed into her final year of Nebraska volleyball.

"Honestly for me it's gone really fast," Wong-Orantes said. "That makes for tons of emotion flying through my head. Sadness, happiness, excited. I've talked to Kadie and Amber. This is our last year and we want to make every single day count. I think our mindset going in is just making it count and leaving no regrets."

Kadie Rolfzen led the Huskers offense from her outside hitter's spot with 3.30 kills per game. Amber Rolfzen moved from right side to middle last season and blossomed into an All-American. She led the team with

---

**Baylor graduate transfer Andie Malloy (left) joined Nebraska's other seniors Kadie Rolfzen, Amber Rolfzen and Justine Wong-Orantes, who came into Nebraska as part of the top-ranked recruiting class in the country in 2013.**



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Wong-Orantes has turned into one of the top liberos in the nation and is currently No. 3 on the list for the USA National Team.

Wong-Orantes also provides valuable leadership from the back row. Cook heard about it this summer.

"Justine was gone for about three weeks," he said. "Everybody felt like there was a vacuum without her being here. That told me she's a very important leader on this team.

The seniors have helped the new players adjust as well. That includes senior Andie Malloy, a graduate transfer from Baylor who was a two-time All-Big 12 selection.

"Right when I got here, they let me know that, 'All right, we're dreaming bigger this summer. And setting really high goals and wanting to make history,'" Malloy said. "Coming into it, right off the bat, I had to have my head on my shoulders right, just knowing what I was getting into. I think the girls did a great job pushing me every day and letting their expectations be known to me."

Sophomore Mikaela Foecke said those three seniors are invaluable for the other players.

"They are great leaders first off," Foecke said. "They've been here for three years already. They want to make history and go out with a bang. That's pushing us to be the best we can be."

---

**The top-ranked Nebraska Class of 2013 recruiting class included back row from left: Kelly Hunter, Kadie Rolfzen, Kira Larson, Amber Rolfzen; Front row: Brenna Lyles, Justine Wong-Orantes, Alexa Ethridge and Melanie Keil.**



# Juniors







# Transferring for Tradition

## Holman, Malloy want to contribute at NU

Story by Bob Hamar • Photos by Mitch Otto & Reggie Ryder

The Huskers are well stocked with returning players from the 2015 national championship team. With Kadie and Amber Rolfzen, setter Kelly Hunter to libero Justine Wong-Orantes to sophomore Mikaela Foecke, the Huskers don't have a lot of holes to fill as they head down the road to a repeat.

But there are a couple. They lost middle blocker Cecilia Hall and outside hitter Kelsey Fien to graduation. However, a couple of transfers may fit right in those spots.

Briana Holman, a 6-1 middle blocker, is now eligible to play. Holman, who was a first-team All-American at LSU in 2014, sat out

last season after her transfer to Nebraska. She will have two years of eligibility with the Huskers.

This off season, Andie Malloy joined the team. Malloy, a 6-2 outside hitter, was a two-time All-Big 12 player at Baylor before joining the Husker program as a graduate student with just one year of eligibility.

Nebraska coach John Cook isn't sure yet what he has in Malloy, but he's gotten a good look at Holman in practices over the past year.

"I think she's hungry, she's worked really hard," Cook said.

**Left: Nebraska's juniors include captain Kelly Hunter, Briana Holman, Sydney Townsend and Annika Allbrecht. Above: Holman is ready to play for Nebraska after sitting out last season due to transfer rules.**

“There are probably going to be some nerves with her. She’s probably going to feel like she has to prove a lot. She will have a lot of expectations on her. I don’t want that to ruin her if she has a bad match.”

Cook said Holman is far from a finished product. Some tough competition early will show where she is heading into her junior year.

“She’s improved a lot, but she still has a lot to improve on,” Cook said. “We’ll get tested early. She’s going to go against some USA level middles. It will be a great test for her.

“I think she’s excited to play. She’s been waiting a long time. But sometimes you can get too hungry. I think we’ll have to settle her down.”

Senior rightside hitter Amber Rolfzen has seen plenty from Holman in practices.

“Going against her in practice is kind of scary sometimes,” she said. “She’s obviously very physical. I would compare her to (Hall) in the fact that both of them can get really high.

Bri is a very physical player. She shared with us the other day that she is always in the moment and she never cheers because she’s so focused.”

Holman is just hoping to fit in and do her job.

“We were national champions, so we’re pretty good already,” Holman said. “Obviously I hope we can continue and make it a back-to-back thing.”

Malloy is working on her master’s degree and found the perfect fit for her at Nebraska. She wants to eventually be a buyer and represent a clothing company.

She also liked the way she fit in with the people in Lincoln.

“The feeling I got on my visit from the coaches, the players and just the fans was great,” Malloy said. “The fan base is huge and just constantly being supported by the community is incredible. I love that. The overall feel of Nebraska, it just felt like the right place for me.”

Malloy now rooms with the Amber Rolfzen and her twin sister Kadie. The trio already knew each other from middle school days when they played on a team together that traveled out of the country to play.

Kadie said she had some advice for Malloy when she was considering the Huskers.

“I remember telling her if you want to come here to Nebraska, you come here be-



cause you want to be great,” Kadie said. “You want to play against the best and you want to be one of the best. I think she really took that to heart because that’s one of the things she mentioned when she committed.

“I told her everyone here can play. You’re going to have to go in every single day and give your best. That’s one thing that us as players really embrace. It’s one thing we’ve

really loved about playing here at Nebraska.”

At Media Day, Cook wasn’t sure just what he had in Malloy.

“I haven’t seen her much,” he said. “The girls love her. They say she fits in like she’s been here a long time. She’s played with Kadie and Amber and Briana on teams so I think it was an easy transition for her.”

**Above: Briana Holman waves to the Devaney Center crowd during the Red-White scrimmage. Right: Andie Malloy**









# Freshman No More

## Foecke expects to be more of force this season

Story by Bob Hamar • Photos by Mitch Otto

Mikaela Foecke could not have ended her freshman season at Nebraska. The 6-3 outside hitter had 12 kills in a 3-1 NCAA semifinal win over Kansas, then followed with 19 kills in a 3-0 win over Texas in the championship match.

That performance earned the 6-3 outside hitter from West Point, Iowa, the Most Outstanding Player award for the Final Four. Now Foecke and the Huskers are back to try and improve on what they did last year on the road to a repeat.

“Winning back to back and making history would definitely be better and bigger,” Foecke said. “That’s what we’re going for this year.”

Foecke was known for how hard she hit the ball. She finished the season second on the team in kills (3.07) while hitting .228. As well as she played last year – especially late in the season – coach John Cook said there is still plenty of room for improvement this season.

“She was a great hitter. She has to become a great blocker,” Cook said. “She was a great server, but she has to become a great defensive player if she’s going to be in the game and serve or play six rotations. Those are the things we challenged her with this spring was blocking, defense and passing.”

Foecke would like to improve her back row defense.

“I’ve been working a lot on my serve receive this summer so I can get better at that, and maybe contribute in a few rotations,” she said.

Senior outside hitter Kadie Rolfzen knows what Foecke is going through. She went through the same things after her freshman season.

“Just thinking back to my freshman year, the main thing is you just have to keep your confidence up,” Rolfzen said. “Being a freshman a lot of people don’t know about you until the middle of the season when they figure out your tendencies.”

An expanded offensive attack would go a long ways towards Foecke becoming an even better player this season.

“One thing I always say is develop an arsenal that’s even bigger than you have now, so get those shots in that you didn’t have last year just so people are always on their toes and they don’t know what’s going to happen,” Rolfzen said. “She’s a great player and goes at it 100 percent all the time. I think she’s going to have a great season.”

Foecke said she understands what she needs to do in order to take the next step this season as a volleyball player.

Above: NU sophomores Mikaela Foecke, Brooke Smith and Olivia Boender. Right: Foecke poses for a photo before the season.





“Everything,” Foecke said. “Mostly just shots. Last year I was a lot of hitting and just trying to outswing people. This year I think it will be more about shots and showing people that I have a variety in my game.”

Cook said Foecke will be even stronger physically this season af-

ter going through the off-season workout program,

“Her big thing was a year in Husker Power,” Cook said. “I think when you look at her this year, you can tell she’s changed. She’s gotten stronger, quicker and more explosive. Hopefully that will allow her to go to another level as a player.”



## NU never made title game next year after championship

Story by Bob Hamar • Photo by Reggie Ryder

Nebraska coach John Cook knows how difficult it is to win two straight national championships.

Cook's teams won titles in 2000 and 2006 before adding his third last year with a 3-0 sweep of Texas in the championship match.

The Huskers were a top contender for a national title in 2001, and considered the team to beat in 2007. Both teams were rated No. 1 in the preseason ratings, just like this year's team. Neither team was able to get it done, but both for different reasons.

The 2001 played well. The Huskers lost that season early to Long Beach State, the eventual NCAA runner-up, then rolled off 29 straight wins to take a 32-1 record into an NCAA semifinal against Stanford, led by All-American Logan Thom.

The Cardinal swept the Huskers that night in San Diego 31-29, 30-28, 30-21. Cook said Thom, who had 22 kills in that match, was just too good.

"I thought we did a great job in 2001," Cook said. "I thought we could have won it but we ran into Logan Thom. She had one of the greatest performances I've ever seen and Stanford beat us in the Final Four out in San Diego. That happens."

The 2007 team was a different story. That team had three future Olympians in Sarah Pavan, Jordan Larson and Kayla Banwarth. It also had 2005 NCAA Player of the Year Christina Houghttelling.

Cook said he learned so much about coaching during that 2007 season. He learned about managing expectations and relationships on a team, and that could help him this year on the road to a repeat.

He's said that 2007 team may have been his best on paper, but it was one of his worst practice teams. That Husker team didn't seem to like to practice, but showed up on game night ready to

play.

At least until the regional final on a snowy December night in Madison, Wisconsin. The Huskers finished 30-2 that season but the 30-28, 31-29, 30-26 loss to Cal in the regional final left the players devastated because they knew they didn't play up to their potential.

"It didn't go so well," he said. "On paper ... you want to talk about a great team? There were three Olympians on that team. There are three players from that team playing in the Olympics right now. That shows how great a team that was on paper."

"But it was not a great team when it came to crunch time. and that's what I think this team has figured out and has been working on really hard this summer. Can they be great at crunch time?"

That's the challenge this season. This year's team probably isn't as talented as the 2007 team, but the Huskers return four All-Americans from last year.

Cook wants the Huskers to enjoy the season. That's something that maybe didn't happen in 2007.

"This team has to enjoy the journey and the process of playing together because that's what they're going to take out of it at the end anyway," he said. "It's not always about wins and losses. It's about how they played. They won the lifeskills this spring. This team is about more than just volleyball players."

But Cook wants some pressure on his players. He doesn't want them to go on cruise control after will the title a year ago.

That's why he throws out the goals of winning back-to-back titles, something now Husker team has done, and winning a Big Ten title, something none of the current players have done.

"If you don't set it out there, you're never going to get it," Cook said.



## NCAA Volleyball Titles Won

**7**

Penn State  
(1999, 2007-10, 2013, 2014)

**6**

Stanford  
(1992, 1994, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2004)

**4**

UCLA  
(1984, 1990, 1991, 2011)  
**NEBRASKA**  
(1995, 2000, 2006, 2015)

## NCAA Volleyball Titles In a Row

**4**

Penn State  
(2007-10)

**2**

Hawaii (1982-83)  
Pacific (1985-86)  
UCLA (1990-91)  
Stanford (1996-97)  
USC (2002-03)  
Penn State (2013-14)

## NCAA Volleyball Title Appearances

**14**

Stanford

**10**

Penn State

**8**

UCLA

**7**

**NEBRASKA**

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# Mikaela Foecke



2016  
**N**  
Sophomore

# Kelly Hunter



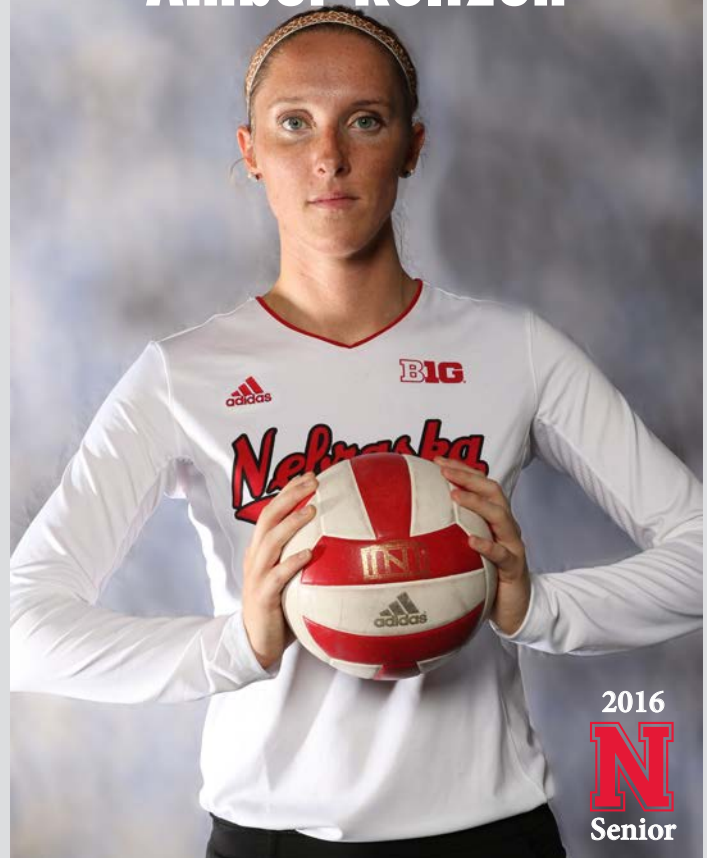
2016  
**N**  
Junior

# Justine Wong-Orantes



2016  
**N**  
Senior

# Amber Rolfzen



2016  
**N**  
Senior



# Kadie Rolfzen



2016  
**N**  
Senior

# Sydney Townsend



2016  
**N**  
Junior

# Brooke Smith



2016  
**N**  
Sophomore

# Andie Maloy



2016  
**N**  
Senior

# Hunter Atherton



# Kenzie Maloney



# Briana Holman



# Annika Albrecht





# Tiani Reeves



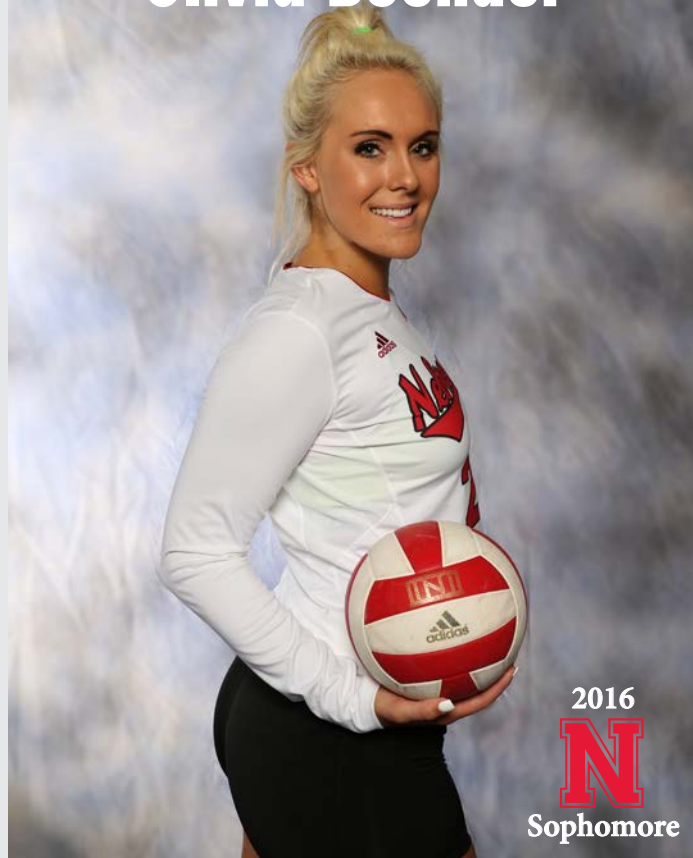
2016  
**N**  
Freshman

# Lauren Stivrins



2016  
**N**  
Freshman

# Olivia Boender



2016  
**N**  
Sophomore





# Season for Sam





*Sam Foltz*  
1994-2016







# 2016 HUSKER FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

| Date        | Opponent       | Location             | Results |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------|---------|
| Sat, Sep 03 | Fresno State   | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Sep 10 | Wyoming        | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Sep 17 | Oregon         | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Sep 24 | Northwestern * | at Evanston, Ill.    | -       |
| Sat, Oct 01 | Illinois *     | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Oct 15 | Indiana *      | at Bloomington, Ind. | -       |
| Sat, Oct 22 | Purdue *       | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Oct 29 | Wisconsin *    | at Madison, Wis.     | -       |
| Sat, Nov 05 | Ohio State *   | at Columbus, Ohio    | -       |
| Sat, Nov 12 | Minnesota *    | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Sat, Nov 19 | Maryland *     | Memorial Stadium     | -       |
| Fri, Nov 25 | Iowa *         | at Iowa City, Iowa   | -       |

\*Conference Games

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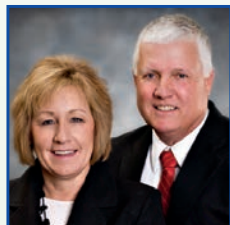
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## 2016 NEBRASKA FOOTBALL ROSTER

| No | Name                 | Pos  | Ht   | Wt  | Yr   | Hometown                                    | No | Name                | Pos | Ht   | Wt  | Yr   | Hometown                                     |
|----|----------------------|------|------|-----|------|---|----|---------------------|-----|------|-----|------|--|
| 1  | Lamar Jackson        | DB   | 6-3  | 195 | Fr.  | Elk Grove, Calif. (Franklin)                | 41 | Luke McNitt         | FB  | 6-2  | 240 | Jr.  | Kearney, Neb. (UNK) (Kearney)                |
| 1  | Jordan Westerkamp    | WR   | 6-0  | 200 | Sr.  | Lombard, Ill. (Montini Catholic)            | 42 | Trey Foster         | TE  | 6-2  | 250 | Sr.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)                    |
| 2  | Tony Butler          | DB   | 6-2  | 195 | Fr.  | Lakewood, Ohio (St. Edward)                 | 43 | Tyrin Ferguson      | LB  | 6-2  | 225 | So.  | New Orleans, La. (Edna Karr)                 |
| 2  | Zack Darlington      | WR   | 6-2  | 195 | So.  | Apopka, Fla. (Apopka)                       | 43 | Todd Honas          | WR  | 5-11 | 200 | Fr.  | Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)                        |
| 3  | Lavan Alston Jr.     | WR   | 6-0  | 175 | RFr. | Oxnard, Calif. (St. Bonaventure)            | 44 | Mitch McCann        | FB  | 6-0  | 240 | Sr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Burke)                          |
| 3  | Marcus Newby         | LB   | 6-1  | 235 | Jr.  | North Potomac, Md. (Quince Orchard)         | 44 | Mick Stoltenberg    | DL  | 6-5  | 290 | So.  | Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)                        |
| 4  | Avery Anderson       | S    | 6-0  | 185 | RFr. | Surprise, Ariz. (Pine Creek Colorado)       | 45 | Ty Chaffin          | WR  | 6-5  | 200 | Fr.  | Burwell, Neb. (Burwell)                      |
| 4  | Tommy Armstrong Jr.  | QB   | 6-1  | 220 | Sr.  | Cibola, Texas (Steele)                      | 45 | A.J. Natter         | DE  | 6-5  | 260 | Jr.  | Milton, Wis. (Milton)                        |
| 5  | Dedrick Young II     | LB   | 6-1  | 220 | So.  | Peoria, Ariz. (Centennial)                  | 47 | Branden Hohenstein  | TE  | 6-4  | 205 | Fr.  | Jackson, Neb. (Bishop Heelan)                |
| 6  | Eric Lee Jr.         | CB   | 6-0  | 190 | RFr. | Milton, Mass. (Valor Christian (Colo)       | 47 | Matt Jarzynka       | DE  | 6-4  | 255 | So.  | Loup City, Neb. (Loup City)                  |
| 7  | Mohamed Barry        | LB   | 6-1  | 220 | RFr. | Grayson, Ga. (Grayson)                      | 48 | Erik Evans          | DE  | 6-3  | 255 | Jr.  | Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)                      |
| 8  | Chris Jones          | CB   | 6-0  | 185 | Jr.  | Jacksonville, Fla. (Sandalwood)             | 49 | Austin Hemphill     | FB  | 6-0  | 220 | RFr. | Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)                        |
| 8  | Stanley Morgan Jr.   | WR   | 6-1  | 200 | So.  | New Orleans, La. (St. Augustine)            | 49 | Chris Weber         | LB  | 6-3  | 230 | Jr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Elkhorn)                        |
| 9  | DaiShon Neal         | DE   | 6-7  | 270 | RFr. | Houston, Texas (Omaha Central)              | 50 | Garret Johns        | DL  | 6-0  | 285 | Sr.  | Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)                        |
| 9  | Keyan Williams       | WR   | 5-10 | 195 | So.  | New Orleans, La. (Fresno State) (Lusher)    | 50 | John Raridon        | OL  | 6-4  | 275 | Fr.  | West Des Moines, Iowa (Valley)               |
| 10 | Joshua Kalu          | CB   | 6-1  | 190 | Jr.  | Houston, Texas (Alief Taylor)               | 51 | Jared Brugmann      | LB  | 6-2  | 235 | RFr. | Gretna, Neb. (Gretna)                        |
| 10 | JD Spielman          | WR   | 5-9  | 180 | Fr.  | Eden Prairie, Minn. (Eden Prairie)          | 52 | Josh Banderas       | LB  | 6-3  | 240 | Sr.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)                    |
| 11 | Cethan Carter        | TE   | 6-4  | 240 | Sr.  | New Orleans, La. (Archbishop Rummel)        | 53 | Alex Boryca         | LB  | 6-2  | 220 | So.  | Cozad, Neb. (Cozad)                          |
| 11 | Boaz Joseph          | CB   | 6-1  | 190 | Jr.  | Weston, Fla. (Cypress Bay)                  | 54 | Creighton Hamik     | LB  | 6-3  | 210 | Fr.  | Kearney, Neb. (Kearney Catholic)             |
| 12 | Luke Gifford         | LB   | 6-3  | 230 | So.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)                   | 54 | Jordan Ober         | LS  | 6-1  | 205 | So.  | Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)              |
| 12 | Patrick O'Brien      | QB   | 6-4  | 230 | Fr.  | San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (S.J. Hills)    | 54 | Robby Painter       | OL  | 6-5  | 300 | Sr.  | Centennial, Colo. (Grandview)                |
| 13 | JoJo Domann          | DB   | 6-1  | 205 | Fr.  | Colorado Springs, Colo. (Pine Creek)        | 55 | Kevin Maurice       | DT  | 6-3  | 300 | Sr.  | Orlando, Fla. (Freedom)                      |
| 13 | Tanner Lee           | QB   | 6-4  | 205 | Jr.  | Destrehan, La. (Tulane) (Jesuit)            | 56 | Brad Simpson        | LB  | 6-0  | 230 | Sr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Ralston)                        |
| 14 | Kyle Kasun           | DB   | 6-0  | 180 | RFr. | Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista South)   | 56 | Boe Wilson          | OL  | 6-3  | 295 | Fr.  | Lee's Summit, Mo. (Lee's Summit West)        |
| 15 | De'Mornay Pierson-El | WR   | 5-9  | 185 | Jr.  | Alexandria, Va. (West Potomac)              | 57 | Jacob Weinmaster    | LB  | 6-0  | 215 | RFr. | Loveland, Colo. (Loveland)                   |
| 15 | Michael Rose-Ivey    | LB   | 6-0  | 230 | Sr.  | Kansas City, Mo. (Rockhurst)                | 58 | Joel Lopez          | DL  | 6-2  | 280 | Jr.  | Saint Charles, Ill. (Burlington Central)     |
| 16 | Antonio Reed         | S    | 6-2  | 220 | So.  | Memphis, Tenn. (Southaven (Miss.)           | 58 | Corey Whitaker      | OL  | 6-5  | 295 | Sr.  | Murrieta, Calif. (Vista Murrieta)            |
| 17 | Ryker Fyfe           | QB   | 6-3  | 215 | Sr.  | Grand Island, Neb. (Grand Island)           | 59 | Brody Cleveland     | LB  | 6-2  | 225 | RFr. | Ogallala, Neb. (Ogallala)                    |
| 17 | Sedrick King         | DE   | 6-4  | 250 | So.  | Plant City, Fla. (Plant City)               | 61 | Bryan Brokop        | OL  | 6-5  | 275 | Fr.  | New Lenox, Ill. (Lincoln-Way West)           |
| 18 | Tre Bryant           | IB   | 5-11 | 200 | Fr.  | St. Louis, Mo. (Christian Brothers)         | 62 | Cole Conrad         | OL  | 6-5  | 305 | So.  | Fremont, Neb. (Archbishop Bergan)            |
| 19 | Marquel Dismuke      | DB   | 6-2  | 180 | Fr.  | Calabasas, Calif. (Calabasas)               | 63 | Tanner Farmer       | OL  | 6-4  | 295 | So.  | Highland, Ill. (Highland)                    |
| 21 | Charles Jackson      | DB   | 5-11 | 180 | Sr.  | Spring, Texas (Klein Collins)               | 65 | Christian Gaylord   | OL  | 6-6  | 300 | RFr. | Baldwin City, Kan. (Baldwin City)            |
| 21 | Mikale Wilbon        | IB   | 5-9  | 195 | So.  | Chicago, Ill. (De La Salle Institute)       | 66 | Dylan Utter         | OL  | 6-1  | 295 | Sr.  | Papillion, Neb. (Papillion-LaVista)          |
| 22 | Alex Davis           | DE   | 6-5  | 255 | RFr. | Riviera Beach, Fla. (Dwyer)                 | 67 | Jerald Foster       | OL  | 6-3  | 310 | So.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)                    |
| 22 | Devine Ozigbo        | IB   | 5-11 | 230 | So.  | Sachse, Texas (Sachse)                      | 68 | Nick Gates          | OL  | 6-5  | 290 | So.  | Las Vegas, Nev. (Bishop Gorman)              |
| 23 | Dicaprio Bootle      | DB   | 5-10 | 180 | Fr.  | Miami, Fla. (Southridge)                    | 71 | Matt Farniok        | OL  | 6-6  | 300 | Fr.  | Sioux Falls, S.D. (Washington)               |
| 23 | Austin Rose          | IB   | 6-1  | 225 | So.  | Lincoln, Neb. (North Star)                  | 72 | Zach Hannon         | OL  | 6-5  | 315 | Jr.  | Kansas City, Mo. (Rockhurst)                 |
| 24 | Aaron Williams       | S    | 5-11 | 185 | So.  | Atlanta, Ga. (Carver)                       | 73 | Sam Hahn            | OL  | 6-7  | 300 | Sr.  | DeWitt, Neb. (N.D. State) (Tri-County)       |
| 25 | Nathan Gerry         | S    | 6-2  | 220 | Sr.  | Sioux Falls, S.D. (Washington)              | 74 | Jalin Barnett       | OL  | 6-4  | 310 | RFr. | Lawton, Okla. (Lawton)                       |
| 26 | Thomas Connely       | LB   | 5-11 | 220 | So.  | Kearney, Neb. (Kearney Catholic)            | 75 | Fyn Anderson        | DL  | 6-3  | 260 | RFr. | Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)                    |
| 26 | Brady Pelzer         | WR   | 5-11 | 185 | So.  | Bellevue, Neb. (Bellevue East)              | 76 | Dwayne Johnson Jr.  | OL  | 6-6  | 300 | Jr.  | Houston, Texas (Bellaire)                    |
| 26 | Jamie Sutcliffe      | PK   | 6-2  | 190 | Sr.  | Thousand Oaks, Calif. (Thousand Oaks)       | 76 | Dylan Owen          | DL  | 6-5  | 240 | So.  | Westchester, N.Y. (Bridgion Academy)         |
| 26 | Kieron Williams      | S    | 6-1  | 195 | Jr.  | Shreveport, La. (Air Force Prep, C.E. Byrd) | 77 | David Knevel        | OL  | 6-9  | 315 | Jr.  | Brantford, Ontario, Canada (Pauline Johnson) |
| 27 | Sam Foltz            | P    | 6-2  | 205 | Sr.  | Greeley, Neb. (Grand Island)                | 79 | Michael Decker      | OL  | 6-4  | 285 | RFr. | Omaha, Neb. (North)                          |
| 28 | Eli Sullivan         | DB   | 6-2  | 190 | Fr.  | Longmont, Colo. (Longmont)                  | 80 | Brett Classen       | WR  | 6-2  | 205 | Jr.  | Medina, Minn. (Winona State) (Wayzata)       |
| 28 | Adam Taylor          | IB   | 6-2  | 210 | Jr.  | Katy, Texas (Katy)                          | 81 | Gabe Rahn           | WR  | 6-1  | 195 | Jr.  | Le Mars, Iowa (Le Mars)                      |
| 29 | Nolan Graham         | DB   | 5-11 | 200 | So.  | Firth, Neb. (Norris)                        | 82 | Alonzo Moore        | WR  | 6-2  | 195 | Sr.  | Winnfield, La. (Winnfield Senior)            |
| 29 | Graham Nabity        | IB   | 6-1  | 210 | Sr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Elkhorn)                       | 83 | David Engelhaupt    | TE  | 6-3  | 230 | Fr.  | Norfolk, Neb. (Norfolk Catholic)             |
| 30 | Quayshon Alexander   | LB   | 6-3  | 235 | Fr.  | Prospect Park, N.J. (De Paul Catholic)      | 83 | Bryan Reimers       | WR  | 6-5  | 210 | So.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Lincoln East)                 |
| 30 | Bo Kitrell           | FB   | 6-1  | 225 | So.  | Ashland, Neb. (Ashland-Greenwood)           | 84 | Sam Cotton          | TE  | 6-5  | 250 | Sr.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)                    |
| 31 | Greg Simmons         | LB   | 6-2  | 240 | Fr.  | Fort Pierce, Fla. (Fort Pierce Central)     | 85 | Matt Snyder         | TE  | 6-5  | 255 | RFr. | San Ramon, Calif. (California)               |
| 31 | Conor Young          | WR   | 6-2  | 170 | RFr. | Cozad, Neb. (Cozad)                         | 86 | Jack Stoll          | TE  | 6-4  | 235 | Fr.  | Lone Tree, Colo. (Regis Jesuit)              |
| 32 | Tanner Hass          | RB   | 6-0  | 195 | Fr.  | West Point, Neb. (Guardian Angels)          | 87 | Brandon Reilly      | WR  | 6-2  | 200 | Sr.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)                    |
| 32 | Pernell Jefferson    | LB   | 6-2  | 225 | Fr.  | New Orleans, La. (Warren Easton)            | 88 | Ross Dzuris         | DE  | 6-3  | 255 | Sr.  | Plattsmouth, Neb. (Plattsmouth)              |
| 33 | Christian Bailey     | WR   | 6-0  | 205 | Jr.  | San Clemente, Calif. (San Clemente)         | 88 | Tyler Hoppes        | TE  | 6-4  | 240 | Jr.  | Lincoln, Neb. (Wayne State) (Southwest)      |
| 33 | Tanner Zlab          | DB   | 5-10 | 195 | Sr.  | Wilber, Neb. (Doane) (Wilber-Clatonia)      | 89 | Connor Ketter       | TE  | 6-5  | 245 | Jr.  | Norfolk, Neb. (Norfolk Catholic)             |
| 34 | Drew Brown           | PK   | 5-11 | 195 | Jr.  | Southlake, Texas (Southlake Carroll)        | 91 | Freedom Akinmoladun | DE  | 6-4  | 255 | So.  | Grandview, Mo. (Grandview)                   |
| 34 | Terrell Newby        | IB   | 5-10 | 200 | Sr.  | Los Angeles, Calif. (Chaminade)             | 92 | Chase Urbach        | LS  | 6-3  | 200 | RFr. | Grosse Pointe, Mich. (Grosse Pointe South)   |
| 35 | Caleb Lightbourn     | P/PK | 6-3  | 220 | Fr.  | Washougal, Wash. (Camas)                    | 94 | Khalil Davis        | DT  | 6-2  | 290 | RFr. | Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)             |
| 35 | Jeremiah Stovall     | DB   | 5-11 | 175 | RFr. | Omaha, Neb. (Creighton Prep)                | 95 | Spencer Lindsay     | PK  | 5-9  | 210 | Sr.  | Kearney, Neb. (Kearney)                      |
| 36 | Spencer Jordan       | FB   | 6-2  | 215 | Fr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Westside)                      | 95 | Ben Stille          | DE  | 6-5  | 240 | Fr.  | Ashland, Neb. (Ashland-Greenwood)            |
| 36 | Reid Karel           | DB   | 6-3  | 205 | RFr. | Seward, Neb. (Seward)                       | 96 | Carlos Davis        | DT  | 6-2  | 295 | RFr. | Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)             |
| 37 | Wyatt Mazour         | IB   | 5-9  | 190 | RFr. | Albion, Neb. (Boone Central)                | 97 | Logan Rath          | DT  | 6-4  | 280 | Sr.  | Giltner, Neb. (S. Dakota State) (Giltner)    |
| 38 | Harrison Jordan      | FB   | 5-10 | 230 | Jr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Westside)                      | 98 | Isaac Armstrong     | P   | 5-11 | 195 | RFr. | Lincoln, Neb. (Kearney) (Southwest)          |
| 39 | Donovan McDonald     | WR   | 5-11 | 175 | RFr. | Montclair, N.J. (Fork Union) (Montclair)    | 98 | Coltin Miller       | DE  | 6-3  | 235 | Fr.  | Fishers, Ind. (Hamilton Southeastern)        |
| 39 | Jordan Nelson        | IB   | 5-8  | 180 | Sr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Burke)                         | 99 | Peyton Newell       | DT  | 6-3  | 290 | So.  | Hiawatha, Kan. (Hiawatha)                    |
| 40 | Ty Betka             | WR   | 5-7  | 165 | Sr.  | Superior, Neb. (Drake)                      |    | Jake Kitten         | OL  | 6-2  | 290 | Fr.  | Santee, Calif. (Santana)                     |
| 40 | Grant Jordan         | LB   | 6-2  | 205 | Fr.  | Omaha, Neb. (Westside)                      |    | Sean Lambert        | IB  | 6-0  | 200 | Fr.  | Fremont, Neb. (Fremont)                      |
| 41 | Noah Johnson         | IB   | 6-0  | 210 | RFr. | Sutton, Neb. (Sutton)                       |    | Ne'Land Smith       | WR  | 6-3  | 190 | Fr.  | Blue Springs, Mo. (Blue Springs)             |





## 2016 SCHEDULE

|                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Sept. 3</b> | <b>@ Nebraska</b> |
| Sept. 10       | Sacramento State  |
| Sept. 17       | @ Toledo          |
| Sept. 24       | Tulsa             |
| Oct. 1         | UNLV              |
| Oct. 8         | @ Nevada          |
| Oct. 14        | San Diego State   |
| Oct. 22        | @ Utah State      |
| Oct. 28        | Air Force         |
| Nov. 5         | @ Colorado State  |
| Nov. 19        | Hawaii            |
| Nov. 26        | San Jose State    |

## 2015 RESULTS (3-9, 2-6)

|                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| Abilene Christian | W, 34-13 |
| @ Ole Miss        | L, 73-21 |
| Utah              | L, 45-24 |
| @ San Jose State  | L, 49-23 |
| @ San Diego State | L, 21-7  |
| Utah State        | L, 56-14 |
| UNLV              | W, 31-28 |
| @ Air Force       | L, 42-14 |
| Nevada            | L, 30-16 |
| @ Hawaii          | W, 42-14 |
| @ BYU             | L, 52-10 |
| Colorado State    | L, 34-31 |

## COACH TIM DERUYTER

A native of Long Beach, CA, Tim DeRuyter begins his fifth season at Fresno State and has an overall record of 29-23. His first season (2012) was a program-changer as he took a team that finished 4-9 the previous year to a 9-4 record that included a Mountain West championship. But it was the next season that elevated DeRuyter in the college football coaching profession. The Bulldogs went 11-2 in 2013, winning the Mountain West Championship and matching the school record for wins in a season. Fresno State rose as high as No. 13 in the poll and finished 20th. DeRuyter's teams had losing records in 2014 (6-8) and 2015 (3-9), but they were in rebuilding mode after losing most of their top players from their conference championship teams.



**Tyquwan Glass**

Story By Shane G. Gilster • Photos Courtesy of Fresno State Athletics

## New-Look Bulldogs won't be ready for Huskers

Fresno State is looking to rebound from its worst season since 1973 when they finished 2-9. Head coach Tim DeRuyter has the ability to turn around teams, and after last season's poor performance, made some big changes.

There will be six new coaches on the Bulldog sideline this fall, including a new offensive and defensive coordinator.

Nebraska knows what it is like to transition with new coaching philosophies and how hard it is for players and coaches to get on the same page, let alone being able to win games.

But now that the Huskers have a year under their belt with their coaching staff, they want to start out fast after losing their season opener last year. Expect this game to be over at halftime as Nebraska gives their backups needed game experience.

**Prediction:** Nebraska 52 Fresno State 21

## Offensive Preview

**Starters Returning/Lost:** 7/4

**Offense:** Spread

**Outlook:** Fresno State has a nice tradition of producing offensive talent. This year's edition isn't devoid of playmakers but they are not the caliber of what they have had in the past.

Quarterback Chason Virgil played in only three games last season as a true freshman before suffering a season-ending shoulder injury. He was granted a medical hardship and enters 2016 as a redshirt freshman.



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“He’s got a great arm, and he’s great at finessing the ball right where it needs to be,” said junior tight end Chad Olsen said. “The fact that he can take off and run just makes it that much better.”

Virgil can make plays with his legs and arm which makes him a versatile threat for new offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau as he works on improving a unit that finished 121st in total offense in 2015.

Kiesau worked at Alabama last season as an offensive analyst, so expect to see a little more emphasis on effective offensive plays, especially early in games. Last year, Fresno State scored an average of 4.3 points in the first quarter of games against FBS opponents.

## Defensive Preview

**Starters Returning/Lost:** 5/6

**Defense:** Multiple 3-4

**Outlook:** The Bulldogs ranked 101st in the country in total defense and 118th in scoring defense last year. Those are two big reasons why they have a new defensive coordinator.

Lorenzo Ward brings his experience from the SEC having been South Carolina’s defensive coordinator since 2009.

“We’ve simplified things on defense to allow the guys to play fast,” Ward said. “We are going to be an attacking defense and create havoc for opposing offenses to get them in long yardage situations.”

One guy that plays fast is cornerback Tyquwan Glass who is a returning starter and second leading tackler among returnees. The senior is possibly the best player on the entire team and looks to lead the team again in interceptions.



Chason Virgil

“We are having fun with him, he’s making the defense a little less hard. I mean our defense is going out there getting ready,” Glass said of Ward and his defense.

## Special Teams Preview

The Bulldogs return their two place kickers from last season with Kody Kroening and Jimmy Camacho, but losing punter Garrett Swanson who also handled kickoffs, is a blow.

Kroening handled field goals that were 40 yards-and-in and PATS, while Camacho attempted field goals of 40-plus. Kroening was 6-for-8 on field goal attempts and 31-for-33 on PATs, while Camacho was 2-for-4 on kicks.

Return man Da’Mari Scott is very good on kickoff returns, averaging 22 yards last season.

Fresno State’s coverage units were scored on more than any other team in the country. They gave up three punt return touchdowns and two kick return scores.

## Did You Know?

Fresno State has only two consensus All-Americans – 1942: Jackie Fellows (QB) and 2012: Phillip Thomas (DB)

## A Look Back

**Nebraska 42, Fresno State 29**  
*Sept. 10, 2011 in Lincoln*

If you like offense, this game had plenty of it. Fresno State came into Lincoln as a heavy underdog against the No. 10 Nebraska Cornhuskers but led 20-14 midway through the third quarter. The Bulldogs racked up 444 yards of total offense but it’s defense couldn’t contain the Huskers.

With NU leading 21-20 entering the fourth quarter, Husker quarterback Taylor Martinez struck a big play with a 53-yard pass play to tight end Kyler Reed. That set-up a Rex Burkhead touchdown and Nebraska had a little more breathing room at 28-20.

But that lead was short-lived as the Bulldogs an-

swered with a touchdown but their two-point conversion to tie failed. NU led 28-26 with 12:06 left in the game.

It seemed as though whoever had the ball last on offense would have an opportunity to win. That might have been the case if it wasn’t for the Husker special teams.

Freshman Ameer Abdullah took the Fresno State kickoff back 100 yards for a touchdown. With that return, he set a school record of 211 kick return yards.

“I wasn’t really doing anything the coaches weren’t expecting me to do,” Abdullah said. “But just at that turning point of the game, it was huge. We were up 28-26 and that play came and we had the big mo (momentum) and we took it.”

Fresno State managed another field goal to make 35-29 with 5:24 left but Nebraska scored again with Martinez racing 46 yards for a touchdown, ending the scoring and giving NU a 42-29 win.

## Fast Facts

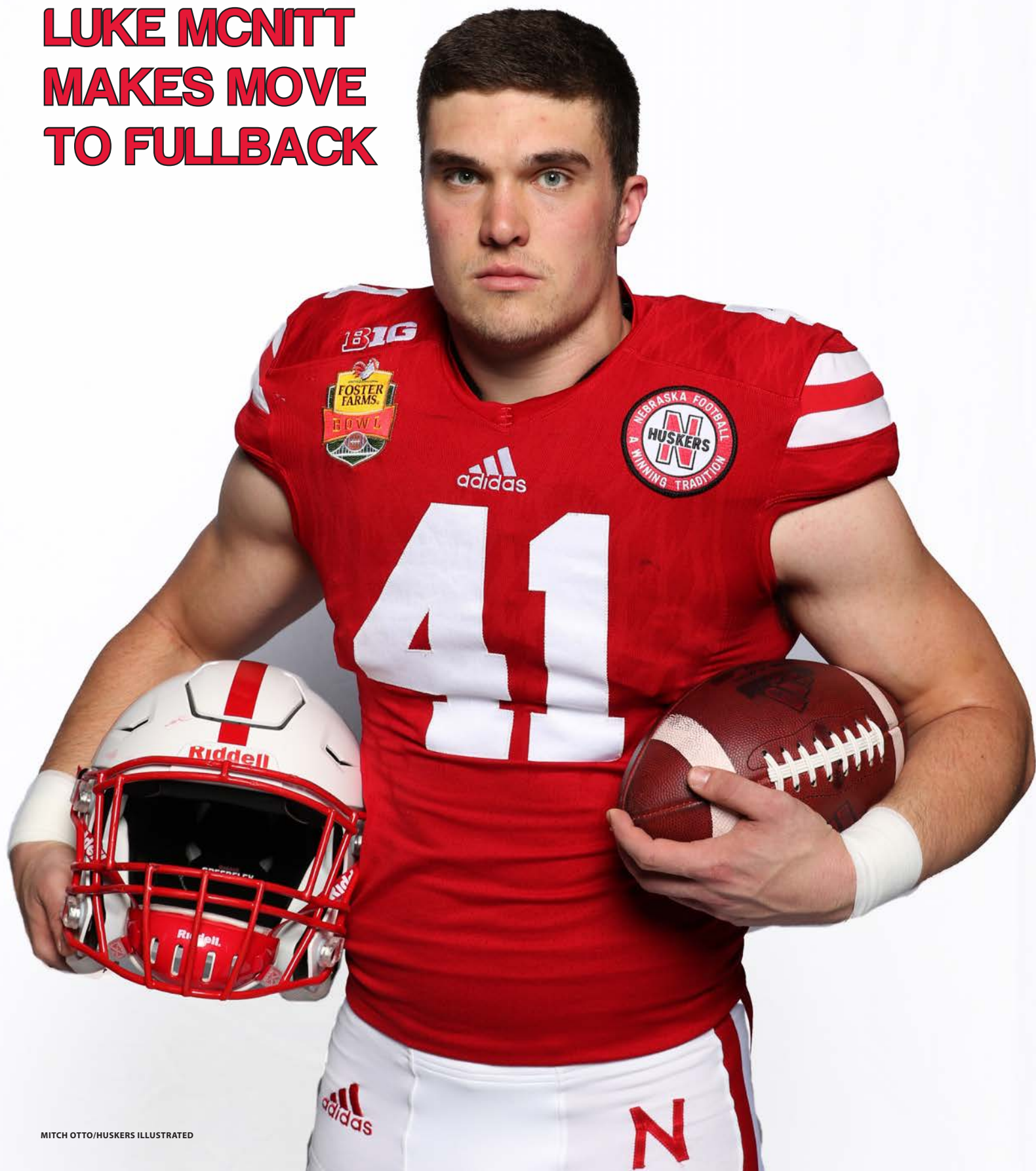
**Location:** Fresno, CA  
**Enrollment:** 24, 136  
**First Year of Football:** 1921  
**National Championships:** 0  
**Conference Titles:** 27  
**Stadium:** Bulldog Stadium  
**Stadium Capacity:** 41,031  
**Nickname:** Bulldogs  
**Mascot:** Victor E. Bulldog III  
**Colors:** Red and Blue  
**2015 Record:** 3-9, 2-6  
**Conference:** Mountain West





# 2MinuteDrill

**LUKE MCNITT  
MAKES MOVE  
TO FULLBACK**





Stories by Kevin Houck, Michael Schaefer and Michael Bruntz

After playing sporadically in five games as a sophomore at tight end and on special teams, Luke McNitt met with running backs coach Reggie Davis and graduate assistant Tavita Thompson and agreed that a move to fullback was in order.

Nebraska was losing Andy Janovich to graduation, and McNitt's versatility as a runner and pass catcher could be a valuable asset at the position. The official position switch soon followed.

"I definitely saw it as a huge opportunity with Andy leaving and nobody else with experience there," McNitt said. "To see the opportunity he got last year, it was good to come into that position right away."

The 6-foot-2, 240-pounder has had a unique college football career to this point. He played one season of quarterback at Nebraska-Kearney in 2013 before transferring to Nebraska. He immediately entered the fray at tight end before switching to fullback this year.

McNitt said Janovich, and the success he had last year for the Huskers are never far from his mind.

"When I'm watching film, I'm watching what Andy does, obviously," McNitt said. "You want to learn from the best, and I'm always learning from him about how he ran a certain route or blocked a specific play."

"It's about the same as last year," McNitt said. "We're just putting in the base packages and everything. Once they saw what Andy could do last year, they started adding more and more. I'm kind of hoping that throughout the season, I can show them what I can do and we can add more."

Because McNitt has experience as a tight end, he should be able to move easily into the fullback spot, which requires a mix of blocking and receiving ability. He is competing with Harrison Jordan and Graham Nability for snaps at the position.

"I think spending time at H-back helped," McNitt said. "They're very similar just coming from a different position on the field. I think learning from Tavita all last year, and then this year learning from Coach Davis and Coach Weiss, and blending all that together has helped."

McNitt has been credited by teammates and coaches as being one of the players who sets the tone for the team in the weight room. McNitt said he recently squatted 500 pounds for six reps, and his bench was around 405. He said he's hoping the work he has shown in the weight room translates to the field as well.

## Huskers choose four captains



At Saturday night's practice, Nebraska's players voted for four captains: linebacker Josh Banderas, center Dylan Utter, wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp and safety Nate Gerry. There will also be a Sam Foltz honorary captain each week, which is something the seniors requested. Westerkamp and Gerry will serve as captains for the second consecutive season, and become just the ninth and 10th two-time captains in school history.

There were of course questions about the captains after Saturday's practice. Gerry, who was a captain in 2015, will be suspended for the opening week of the season for a violation of team rules. Riley said his sense was that the team has a load of respect for the senior safety.

"I think the team respects Nate a ton," Riley said. "Also, all of us, with the team or on the team, we've all had stuff and we know that. Nate made a mistake. That doesn't diminish him as a leader and what he's done for this team through the years. He's had a great, great offseason with this team and I think they recognized that. He'll go on, make good decisions, and I don't think we'll see any of that again and the team obviously really respects him."

The other question was about the omission of quarterback Tommy Armstrong from the captains list. Armstrong had been a captain in 2015, but was not among those voted back in 2016. Riley said a larger senior class in 2016 made for more competition than a year ago.

"I'll say I was probably a little surprised," Riley said. "I know the explanation and I told the seniors this when we were going to select captains. As we had a meeting and talked about our selection of captains and talked about a different format than a year ago. I told them, the one thing that would happen is that there are lots of choices. I even said I was halfway encouraging game captains because we have so many leaders within this senior group. I appreciate them, and they said, 'no let's vote like we have.' I knew it was going to be hard. A guy like Tommy got a lot of votes, but every team has a little different dynamic, new people emerge, it gets hard in the competition."

Riley noted that neither Tommie Frazier nor Scott Frost were captains during their final seasons at Nebraska. Regardless of the captaincy, Riley said Armstrong is a respected leader on the team.

"Tommy is a leader, he is the quarterback, everybody respects him, so I think it was just very, very hard," Riley said.



"I take a lot of pride in it," McNitt said. "It started back in high school, the coaches really instilled that work ethic in us in Kearney. I definitely like to show up and motivate other guys and get other people going as well."

### Pierson-El Works Way Back

Nebraska receiver De'Mornay Pierson-El found Saturday's scrimmage to be motivating. The receiver was used in a variety of ways - out of the slot, as an outside wideout and lined up at punt returner.

The moment that might've signified to Pierson-El that he's close to returning to the form that had so many people excited came when he raced past a defender and hauled in a touchdown on a go-route.

"I think it was a big step forward confidence wise," he said. "I'm putting in the work every day, watching practice film and I think it all just kind of came together last week. That was a big week for me. I stopped thinking and just started playing."

Pierson-El said he doesn't have any set number goals for the season, but rather he just wants to find a way to stay healthy and contribute.

The junior missed most of the 2015 season with two different injuries. Pierson-El said he appreciated the two days off from practice to allow his body a little more time to heal, but he's close to being all the way back and he's looking forward to helping out his team.

Conditioning wise though, Pierson-El is not quite where he wants to be.

"I'm a little fatigued right now," he said. "I've got to do a little bit more recovery stuff and get my legs warmed up before practice."

### Alternative Uniforms a Hit

Maybe the most talked about thing of the day was the Huskers revealing their alternate uniforms that they will wear on Sept. 24 at Northwestern. Adidas went with away jerseys after not finding success with home jerseys the past two seasons and they were a hit amongst players.

"We're pretty excited," senior wide receiver Brandon Reilly said. "A lot of guys like when we go all-white, so it's kind of the extra flair on the all-white. It's a good look. It's a personal preference. I'm sure people out there don't like them, but you can never please anybody."

Many skill position players live for



Nebraska will wear these alternative uniforms for the Northwestern game.

moments like this to wear alternate jerseys but the offensive line likes to keep things simple.

"It's kind of unfortunate," senior center Dylan Utter said. "You kind of like to wear those for the home crowd, but i'd say they are probably the best ones we've had so far. Not really excited just because all of those skinny guys can throw on all the accessories and look pretty fly, but linemen kind of just keep it simple."

### Corners Focus on Turnovers

Ball production has been the theme of fall camp for Nebraska's corners, assistant Brian Stewart said last week.

By ball production, Stewart means coming away with interceptions - something Nebraska's corners struggled with early on last season.

"You don't know the guys until you

play a game," Stewart said. "We weren't great at ball production. It's not that we weren't great players, it's just that we weren't good at ball production. We didn't get our hands on enough balls, and it showed. Later in the year, we played some guys who got their hands up, and you got to see outcome with ball production and without."

Last season, Nebraska inserted Joshua Kalu and Chris Jones into the lineup as starting corners late in the season, and both saw good results. Kalu had three interceptions, and Jones had two. Coming up with more interceptions will be key to winning the turnover battle, and also shutting down the big passing plays that plagued Nebraska in 2015.

Stewart highlighted freshman Lamar Jackson and Jones as two guys who are among the best at coming away with in-



terceptions.

“The reason (Jackson) does that well is because he tries to attack the football every time,” Stewart said. “There are some guys who make sure they cover their guy. Their guy is not going to catch the ball, but they’re not going to get an interception. What he does is that he’s going to cover his guy, and he’s going to get the ball. That’s a lot of what Chris Jones does.

“I’m pretty excited. It’s like Christmas. Next Saturday you get those guys out there, see them attack the ball and play some ball again. It’s exciting.”

One other wrinkle that Nebraska will use to help its corners is incorporating more Cover-3. Stewart said Nebraska used it at times last season, but that it could see more use by the Huskers this year.

Stewart said having more familiarity with personnel allows the defensive staff to mix things up a bit.

“I think we’re going to sprinkle in a little bit of everything,” Stewart said. “I just think every now and then, the corners are going to need a reprieve and I think playing a little cover 3 and mixing some other stuff helps with that.”

### **Gerry, Reilly Suspended for Opener**

Nebraska head coach Mike Riley announced two suspensions for the Huskers’ season-opener against Fresno State.

Riley said both senior wide receiver Brandon Reilly and senior safety Nate Gerry would be suspended one game each for violations of team rules. Reilly was ticketed for driving under the influence in the spring.

With Gerry out for the first game of the season, defensive coordinator Mark Banker said Kieron Williams and Aaron Williams would be the Huskers’ options at safety, as well as sophomore Antonio Reed.

“I haven’t told them who will step on the field,” Banker said. “They’re all quite close from a standpoint of the order and we graded the two scrimmages, and a red ball period. We took it plus and minus and production or lack of production.”

Banker said regardless of who starts, all three will see significant snaps.

Riley also officially announced that freshman wide receiver Derrion Grim has opted to transfer. Riley said he thought Grim would likely head to a junior college.

### **Hahn Given the Start at Left Guard**

Nebraska is putting together potential options at left guard with Jerald Foster out for the season.

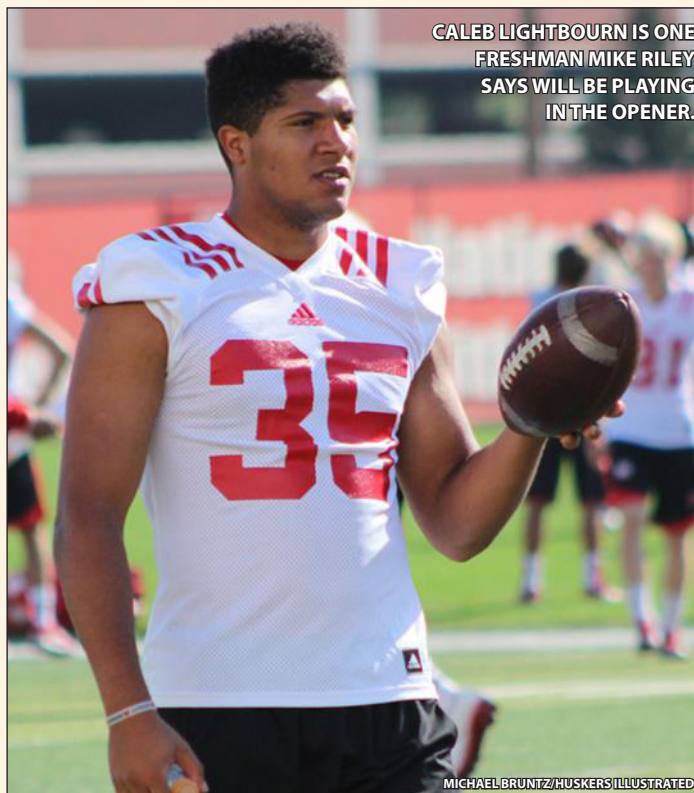
On Saturday, the coaches gave the nod to walk-on Sam Hahn, a 6-foot-6, 300-pounder from Tri County High School.

Hahn had previously backed up David Knevel at right tackle, but will be given the opportunity on the inside.

“We (coaches) just talked about him last week,” NU offensive line coach Mike Cavanaugh said. “It could be kind of like the Zach Sterup deal. Maybe he’s better at guard. He’s smart and he’s been in the system for a year

## **HI’S TOP 5**

# **FRESHMEN WHO WILL PLAY IMMEDIATELY**



CALEB LIGHTBOURN IS ONE FRESHMAN MIKE RILEY SAYS WILL BE PLAYING IN THE OPENER.

MICHAEL BRUNTZ/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

- 1 LAMAR JACKSON, CORNERBACK**
- 2 TRE BRYANT, RUNNING BACK**
- 3 JOJO DOMANN, SAFETY**
- 4 CALEB LIGHTBOURN, PUNTER**
- 5 TO BE DETERMINED**

A number of freshmen will definitely play this year: Riley said on Saturday that those players are: cornerback Lamar Jackson, running back Tre Bryant, safety JoJo Domann and punter Caleb Lightbourn. Riley said a number of other players will be kept on “redshirt alert” meaning they will continue to practice with the top units, and could play if needed. Those players are: offensive linemen Boe Wilson, Matt Farniok and John Raridon and cornerback Dicaprio Bootle. Riley said freshman wide receiver JD Spielman is right on the cusp of redshirting because of wide receiver depth. Freshman safety Tony Butler will redshirt. Freshman Quayshon Alexander will undergo shoulder surgery. Riley said they were aware of that coming into the fall.



and a half. That's good."

Behind Hahn will be true freshman Boe Wilson.

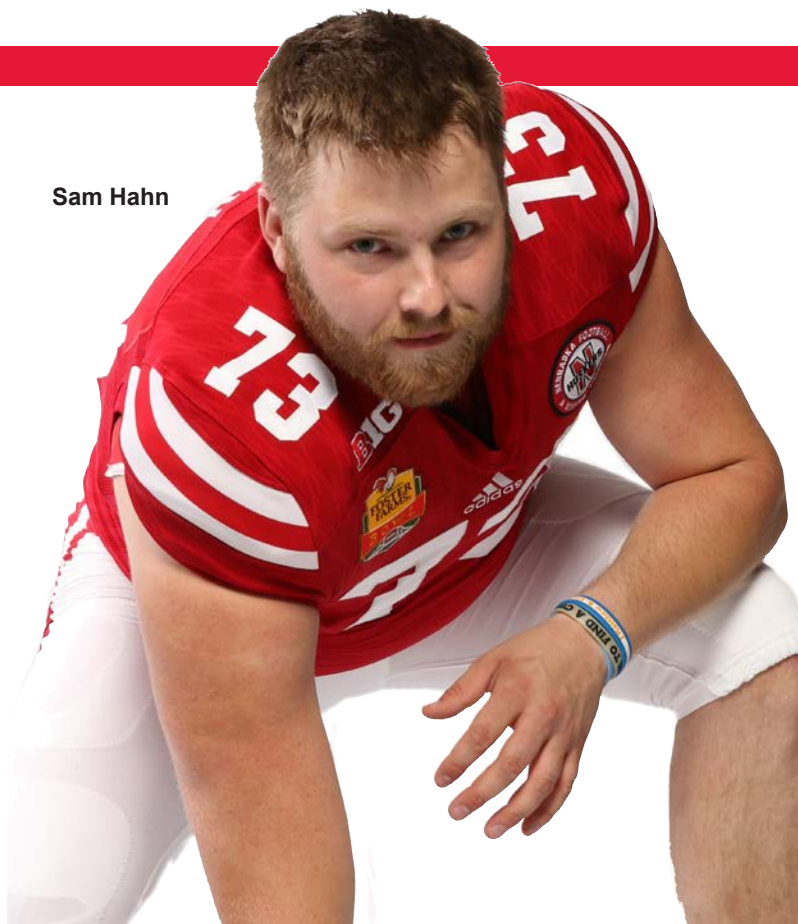
"He's a really good athlete, he's really powerful, but he's got a lot to learn," Cavanaugh said. "We're going to keep working with him and see how it goes. Boe was probably the most technically sound out of the freshmen. He's a good run blocker and has good technique for pass protection. He was a well coached guy coming out of high school."

Wilson has gotten plenty of reps with the ones in recent days, Cavanaugh wants to make sure the Huskers are solid in case the true freshman struggles or catches the injury bug that cost the Huskers Foster and senior Corey Whitaker.

Another player who could see action is Jalin Barnett, who also has been battling injuries.

"He's had some aches and pains, some different things going on," Cavanaugh said.

Sam Hahn



## 2016 Big Ten Football Schedule

### East Division

| Team           | Sep. 3        | Sep. 10       | Sep. 17       | Sep. 24     | Oct. 1         | Oct. 8        | Oct. 15      | Oct. 22         | Oct. 29         | Nov. 5      | Nov. 12         | Nov. 19         | Nov. 26        |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| INDIANA        | at FIU (9/1)  | Ball State    | OFF           | Wake Forest | Michigan State | at Ohio State | Nebraska     | at Northwestern | Maryland        | at Rutgers  | Penn State      | at Michigan     | Purdue         |
| MARYLAND       | Howard        | at FIU (9/9)  | at UCF        | OFF         | Purdue         | at Penn State | Minnesota    | Michigan State  | at Indiana      | at Michigan | Ohio State      | at Nebraska     | Rutgers        |
| MICHIGAN       | Hawaii        | UCF           | Colorado      | Penn State  | Wisconsin      | at Rutgers    | OFF          | Illinois        | at Michigan St. | Maryland    | at Iowa         | Indiana         | at Ohio State  |
| MICHIGAN STATE | Furman (9/2)  | OFF           | at Notre Dame | Wisconsin   | at Indiana     | BYU           | Northwestern | at Maryland     | Michigan        | at Illinois | Rutgers         | Ohio State      | at Penn State  |
| OHIO STATE     | Bowling Green | Tulsa         | at Oklahoma   | OFF         | Rutgers        | Indiana       | at Wisconsin | at Penn State   | Northwestern    | Nebraska    | at Maryland     | at Michigan St. | Michigan       |
| PENN STATE     | Kent State    | at Pittsburgh | Temple        | at Michigan | Minnesota      | Maryland      | OFF          | Ohio State      | at Purdue       | Iowa        | at Indiana      | at Rutgers      | Michigan State |
| RUTGERS        | at Washington | Howard        | New Mexico    | Iowa        | at Ohio State  | Michigan      | Illinois     | at Minnesota    | OFF             | Indiana     | at Michigan St. | Penn State      | at Maryland    |

### West Division

|              |                  |                |                  |                 |               |              |                 |             |               |                 |              |              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| ILLINOIS     | Murray State     | North Carolina | Western Michigan | OFF             | at Nebraska   | Purdue       | at Rutgers      | at Michigan | Minnesota     | Michigan State  | at Wisconsin | Iowa         | at Northwestern  |
| IOWA         | Miami, OH        | Iowa State     | North Dakota St. | at Rutgers      | Northwestern  | at Minnesota | at Purdue       | Wisconsin   | OFF           | at Penn State   | Michigan     | at Illinois  | Nebraska (11/25) |
| MINNESOTA    | Oregon St. (9/1) | Indiana State  | OFF              | Colorado State  | at Penn State | Iowa         | at Maryland     | Rutgers     | at Illinois   | Purdue          | at Nebraska  | Northwestern | at Wisconsin     |
| NEBRASKA     | Fresno State     | Wyoming        | Oregon           | at Northwestern | Illinois      | OFF          | at Indiana      | Purdue      | at Wisconsin  | at Ohio State   | Minnesota    | Maryland     | at Iowa (11/25)  |
| NORTHWESTERN | Western Michigan | Illinois State | Duke             | Nebraska        | at Iowa       | OFF          | at Michigan St. | Indiana     | at Ohio State | Wisconsin       | at Purdue    | at Minnesota | Illinois         |
| PURDUE       | Eastern Kentucky | Cincinnati     | OFF              | Nevada          | at Maryland   | at Illinois  | Iowa            | at Nebraska | Penn State    | at Minnesota    | Northwestern | Wisconsin    | at Indiana       |
| WISCONSIN    | LSU              | Akron          | Georgia State    | at Michigan St. | at Michigan   | OFF          | Ohio State      | at Iowa     | Nebraska      | at Northwestern | Illinois     | at Purdue    | Minnesota        |

(1) at Lambeau Field, Green Bay, WI

2016 Big Ten Championship Game - Saturday, Dec. 3 - Lucas Oil Stadium - Indianapolis, IN



# Huskers currently ranked 28th in 2017 247Sports Composite

With the start of the 2016 season just around the corner, many fans are interested in how their favorite teams are doing in terms of recruiting for the future.

The 247Sports Composite shows that the SEC and Big Ten Conferences both are doing well with the Class of 2017.















The Huskers find themselves currently ranked No. 28 in the most recent rankings.

Below is a list of the Top 30 teams plus how all the Big Ten Conference teams rank.

## School (Hard Commits)

1. Ohio State (18)
2. Alabama (21)
3. LSU (20)
4. Oklahoma (19)
5. Georgia (14)
6. Notre Dame (17)
7. Clemson (13)
8. Florida State (13)
9. Miami (20)
10. Michigan (18)
11. Tennessee (24)
12. Florida (16)
13. Texas A&M (18)
14. Auburn (14)
15. South Carolina (21)
16. USC (15)
17. North Carolina (15)
18. Arizona (26)
19. Maryland (15)
20. Mississippi State (20)
21. Penn State (15)
22. Iowa (16)
23. Ole Miss (15)
24. Arkansas (19)
25. Duke (20)
26. Rutgers (20)
27. Michigan State (16)
- 28. NEBRASKA (14)**
29. Washington (12)
30. Oklahoma State (18)
31. Northwestern (18)
44. Wisconsin (11)
54. Indiana (14)
56. Illinois (11)
62. Purdue (13)
70. Minnesota (11)

## Nebraska Hard Commitments in Class of 2017 (14)

|   |  |     |        |     |  |                     |
|---|--|-----|--------|-----|--|---------------------|
|    | <b>Avery Roberts</b><br>Concord (Wilmington, DE) 📍                 | ILB | 6-1    | 215 | ★★★★★ 0.9303<br>Natl 161 Pos 5 St 1    | Commit<br>4/21/2016 |
|    | <b>Tristan Gebbia</b><br>Calabasas (Calabasas, CA) 📍               | PRO | 6-3    | 180 | ★★★★★ 0.9213<br>Natl 191 Pos 8 St 21   | Commit<br>4/4/2016  |
|    | <b>Jaevon McQuitty</b><br>Battle (Columbia, MO) 📍                  | WR  | 5-11.5 | 191 | ★★★★★ 0.8944<br>Natl 293 Pos 40 St 2   | Commit<br>3/12/2016 |
|    | <b>Keyshawn Johnson</b><br>Calabasas (Calabasas, CA) 📍             | WR  | 6-1    | 195 | ★★★★★ 0.8939<br>Natl 294 Pos 41 St 33  | Commit<br>3/23/2016 |
|    | <b>Matt Sichterman</b><br>Kings (Kings Mills, OH) 📍                | OT  | 6-5    | 266 | ★★★★★ 0.8760<br>Natl 404 Pos 42 St 18  | Commit<br>5/15/2016 |
|    | <b>Guy Thomas</b><br>Booker T. Washington (Miami, FL) 📍            | WDE | 6-3    | 202 | ★★★★★ 0.8727<br>Natl 431 Pos 24 St 60  | Commit<br>8/8/2016  |
|   | <b>Brenden Jaimes</b><br>Lake Travis (Austin, TX) 📍                | OT  | 6-5    | 250 | ★★★★★ 0.8631<br>Natl 532 Pos 60 St 68  | Commit<br>4/16/2016 |
|  | <b>Deontre Thomas</b><br>Mustang (Mustang, OK) 📍                   | DT  | 6-3    | 280 | ★★★★★ 0.8590<br>Natl 584 Pos 45 St 9   | Commit<br>4/30/2016 |
|  | <b>Austin Allen</b><br>Aurora (Aurora, NE) 📍                       | TE  | 6-8    | 210 | ★★★★★ 0.8512<br>Natl 731 Pos 34 St 1   | Commit<br>4/14/2016 |
|  | <b>Reese Leitao</b><br>Jenks (Jenks, OK) 📍                         | TE  | 6-4    | 234 | ★★★★★ 0.8503<br>Natl 749 Pos 35 St 11  | Commit<br>8/27/2016 |
|  | <b>Broc Bando</b><br>IMG Academy (Bradenton, FL) 📍                 | OG  | 6-5    | 280 | ★★★★★ 0.8413<br>Natl 972 Pos 41 St 140 | Commit<br>6/17/2016 |
|  | <b>Willie Hampton</b><br>American Heritage (Fort Lauderdale, FL) 📍 | OLB | 6-1    | 225 | ★★★★★ 0.8402<br>Natl 979 Pos 74 St 141 | Commit<br>3/9/2016  |
|  | <b>Robert Porcher IV</b><br>Dr. Phillips (Orlando, FL) 📍           | WDE | 6-3    | 245 | ★★★★★ 0.8250<br>Natl NA Pos 60 St 192  | Commit<br>6/29/2016 |
|  | <b>Ben Miles</b><br>Catholic (Baton Rouge, LA) 📍                   | FB  | 6-1    | 210 | ★★★★★ 0.8032<br>Natl NA Pos 3 St 77    | Commit<br>7/31/2016 |

## Did You Know?

Ohio State currently has six five-star hard commitments, followed by three at Alabama, two by Clemson and one each by Florida State, LSU, Georgia, Auburn, LSU and Southern California.



# Limited Opportunity

## Clayton got his chance at quarterback in 1985

Story By Shane G. Gilster

McCathorn Clayton came to Nebraska as a highly-regarded quarterback recruit from the state of Florida.

Even though he missed half of his senior season in 1982 due to injury, he was still courted by some of the top college football programs in the nation.

Clayton attended Orlando Jones High School and played against Division I talent like Alonzo Highsmith and Melvin Bratton, who went on to star at Miami, Fla. and Florida State's Deion Sanders.

So which Florida school did Clayton grow up watching and cheering for? None.

"The Florida schools at that time were not dominant on the national scene. So growing up, I was a fan of USC," Clayton said. "But the player I liked emulating was Reggie Collier, who played quarterback at Southern Mississippi. He was a dominant player in college and was such a dual threat who could beat you with his arm and legs."

Collier was a good one to watch. In 1981, he became the first quarterback in NCAA Division I history to pass and rush for over 1,000 yards in a single season.

There were some similarities between Collier and Clayton. Both were fast – Clayton was a track athlete and ran the 40-yard dash in the 4.4 - 4.5 second range. Both could beat you with their arm – Clayton passed for over 1,200 yards and rushed for another 500 as a junior in high school.

But one of the attributes Clayton had that made him unique from any other quarterback was his physicalness.

"I was about 6-0 and around 205 pounds, but on my recruiting visit I weighed 220 and could bench 420 pounds," Clayton said. "Tom Osborne thought I was too big for a quarterback. He was not used to having a quarterback lift weights like I did. But the quarterback in Nebraska's system took a lot of punishment so Osborne's philosophy changed after I left and he started to recruit more physical quarterbacks."

Clayton's physical qualities also made



McCathorn Clayton carries the ball for the Huskers during his playing days.



him a good fit for the defensive side of the ball. Even though he really didn't play a lot as a defensive back in high school, colleges saw him as a better fit there than at quarterback.

"Bobby Bowden of Florida State wanted me as a strong safety and said I would be No. 2 on the depth chart right away as a freshman," Clayton said. "Florida and Miami saw me more of an athlete and said they would try me at quarterback but I didn't like hearing that."

So the Florida schools were out of the mix for Clayton. He only looked at those who were recruiting him as a quarterback. He narrowed his list to Michigan, Ohio State, Alabama and Nebraska. But Michigan was the top school for him and he pretty much made up his mind he was going to be a Wolverine.

"Michigan ran an offensive style that I ran in high school and when I went on my visit there I knew that they were the school for me," Clayton said.

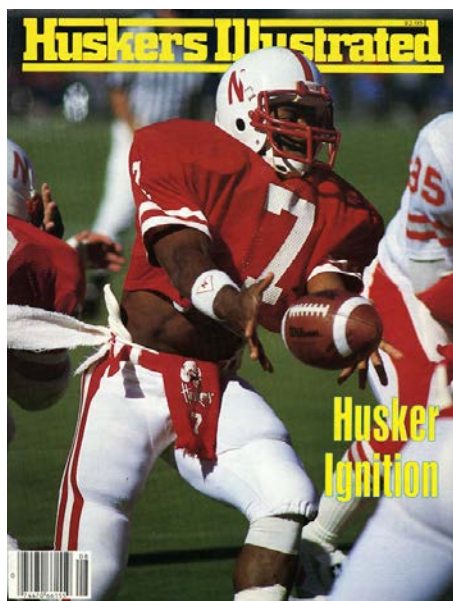
Clayton wasn't the only quarterback the Wolverines were recruiting. Jim Harbaugh committed to Michigan and was visiting Ann Arbor at the same time Clayton was.

"I knew Harbaugh from quarterback camps and we both wanted to go to Michigan together. When we both sat down with head coach Bo Schembechler, Harbaugh committed and I said Michigan was my number one school but wanted to take my last two visits to Ohio State and Nebraska," Clayton said.

When Clayton went to Nebraska he was genuinely impressed. Then when Tom Osborne made an in-home visit, Clayton's mom fell in love with the Husker head coach and told her son that Nebraska would be a good fit for him.

Clayton now needed time to think about his two finalists – Michigan and Nebraska. But it took a phone call from the Michigan coaches to help him make up his mind.

"Michigan's recruiting coordinator called me and started talking about me arriving in June to get ready for my freshman year at Michigan," Clayton recalled. "I said I was still deciding between Nebraska and Michigan. He got upset and said I committed to Bo and Bo thinks I am coming to Michigan. I explained that I didn't commit and said I told Bo, Michigan was my number one school but that I needed to take my



**McCathorn Clayton on the cover of Huskers Illustrated magazine.**

remaining visits."

Shortly after that phone conversation, Schembechler called Clayton and was pressuring him into committing. Clayton didn't like that. He thought this was something Osborne and Nebraska would never do.

"Osborne just told me that I was their number one recruit and they would love to have me," Clayton said. "So after my conversation with Bo, Nebraska and Osborne popped into my head and I chose them."

Clayton knew he wouldn't be able to make much of an impact his freshman year in 1983. Nebraska was ranked No. 1 in the country and had one of the best quarterbacks with Turner Gill and a proven backup in Nate Mason.

So Clayton was regulated to play on the NU freshman team in a three-quarterback system, but he still led the Huskers in scoring with five touchdowns.

With Gill and Mason both graduating, 1984 seemed like the year Clayton would vie for the starting position. He was easily the most talented quarterback Nebraska had on its roster but inexperience and inconsistency hurt him in spring and fall camp.

"I wish I could have played that year," said Clayton who redshirted in 1984. "I ran the best options and had some dynamic throws but turned the ball over too much. That was my only downfall when I got graded."

So he watched from the sidelines as Nebraska used two quarterbacks – Craig

Sundberg and Travis Turner. At times during the season, the Huskers could have benefited from the athletic Clayton who would have given the offense a dynamic option.

In 1985, Clayton was finally ready to assume the starting job. He actually won it in fall camp and was ready to showcase his talent on national television to open the season against a team from his home state.

"Before the game I remember ABC's Keith Jackson interviewed me and said people in Florida were wondering what happened to me at Nebraska? No one saw me play, because I played on the freshman team one year and redshirted the following season," Clayton said.

Osborne told Clayton he was the starter but before the game he informed him that Travis Turner would start because he wanted Clayton to stand by him to watch the Florida State defensive scheme.

"Even though I knew I was the number one quarterback, Turner got the start and it affected me," Clayton said. "Once I got in the game I had to get into the flow of it. I'm not saying we would have won if I had started but it would have been different for me personally."

Clayton got his chance early in the second quarter, replacing Turner and ran for a career-high 97 yards on nine carries in a 17-13 loss to the Seminoles.

Clayton started 10 of the Huskers' 12 games during the 1985 season but split time with Turner at quarterback. As a result, his season stats were modest at best with 600 yards passing and 3 TDs and close to 300 yards rushing and 5 TDs.

But there was one game where Clayton displayed what he was capable of.

It was against undefeated and 5<sup>th</sup>-ranked Oklahoma State in Stillwater. OSU had a team who could beat the Huskers but Clayton put on a show guiding the NU offense on 8 of 16 passing for 161 yards and a TD, and running for two scores in a 34-24 win.

"The Oklahoma State game was a prime example of what we could be on offense, because we were unpredictable. If we could have stuck with that during the season, maybe the outcome would have been different in the games we lost," Clayton said.

OSU head coach Pat Jones commented on Clayton's performance against his Cowboys:



## Husker Look Back

“Clayton gives them a dimension that I don’t think they’ve had since Turner Gill left. Obviously, he threw the ball well enough with telling effect like Gill and some of those other quarterbacks they’ve had in the past. He’s got so much running ability with the threat of the option.”

It wasn’t publicized but Clayton said he was only 65-70 percent against the Cowboys. He sprained an ankle the week before against New Mexico that limited him.

“I had no acceleration running the option in that Oklahoma State game,” Clayton said. “But I had the plays down mentally and could throw the ball so Osborne played me. Unfortunately, it never healed and affected me the whole year.”

Even though Clayton and his team had a great game against Oklahoma State, the older players reminded him that he hadn’t seen anything yet until they played Oklahoma.

“I said but this is what we can do and they said, ‘No, Oklahoma State is not Oklahoma, it will not be the same.’ ‘Every week after that they reminded me how much better I am going to have to be when we play Oklahoma. I was like, ‘Geez, how could are they’,” Clayton said.

Second-ranked Nebraska played the No. 5 Sooners in Norman with the Orange Bowl and a chance to play for the National Championship against Penn State on the line. Clayton and the Huskers got outplayed and didn’t score an offensive touchdown in a 27-7 loss.

“It wasn’t like they were physically better or more talented than us, it was more like they knew how to play us better than anyone else,” Clayton explained on how OU shut them down offensively. “I remember our first option play, I audibled and they knew it and played that option to a tee. Their defense was robotic at understanding our system.”

With the loss the Huskers went to the Fiesta Bowl to face the team and coach Clayton almost signed with out of high school; the Michigan Wolverines and Bo Schembechler.

Michigan’s starting quarterback was Jim Harbaugh so Clayton thought this was his time to whoop their butt. And it looked like the Huskers were going to do just that as they led 14-3 at halftime.



**McCathorn Clayton wore No. 7 for the Huskers.**

“I remember Doug DuBose, Tom Rathman and I arguing at halftime who was going to be MVP of the game,” Clayton said laughing. “Then we came out in the second half and Doug fumbled the ball, then on our next series, I fumbled the ball. Michigan scored on both turnovers. So here is Doug, Tom and I all on the bench in the second half watching Michigan comeback to win. I was like, ‘Ok, what happened to who was going to win the MVP’. We just gave the game away ... it was bonehead mental mistakes by us.”

Even though the season started and ended on a losing note, Clayton thought his 1985 team was just as good as anybody else in the country, especially since the Husker backfield featured two of the all-time best at NU.

“I was confident knowing I had Rathman and DuBose in the backfield with me,” Clayton said. “Both guys were threats to take it to the house every time I gave them the ball. DuBose was one of the best and most talented athletes I ever played with at Nebraska.”

Clayton was just a sophomore during that 1985 season, but it would be the last time he would start at quarterback at Nebraska.

Because a talented freshman named Steve Taylor used his Fiesta Bowl performance to springboard him as the starter in 1986 and he would keep that spot over the next three years.

As a senior, Clayton made the move

to cornerback and was a backup, playing in eight games during the 1987 season. A quiet end for player that came to Nebraska heralded as the next great Husker quarterback.

Clayton later tried out with the Miami Dolphins as a defensive back but before camp he injured his calf muscle so that ended his professional chance.

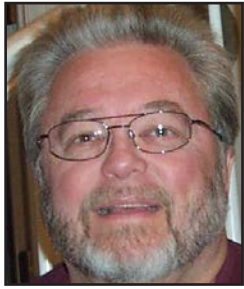
So he stayed in Nebraska and is now an account executive for Nihon Kohden America. He also has a sports mentoring program for high school student athletes. Clayton lives in Omaha and is married to wife Kelli. They have two daughters – McKenzie (16) and Kendyl (16).

“If we would have had a son, I would have liked to name him McCathorn, but my wife told me she didn’t like that idea,” Clayton said laughing. “But I had a former high school teammate call me out of the blue one day and told me he had so much respect for me that he named his son McCathorn.”

It is indeed a unique name. Clayton said his father is also named McCathorn which is how he got his. So where did this name come from?

“My grandmother liked General MacArthur but given the little education she had, she didn’t know how to spell it so it was spelled McCathorn and she used that,” Clayton said.

McCathorn is a name Husker fans will remember but they also should not forget how talented and promising this quarterback was at Nebraska.



# A Stroll Down Rasmussen Road With **JOSEPH ORDUNA**

Football Player 1967-70

## Column by Butch Rasmussen

I've known Joseph Orduna for, oh, let's say a couple months. I've known about Joe Orduna for about, oh, let's say half a century.

There's Joe Orduna the great Husker tailback of the Bob Devaney National Championship years and their's Joseph Orduna spiritually connected man of great faith who refers to his wife frequently as his "beloved". Even when I ask him his wife's name he profusely apologizes for not having offered. "I am ashamed I did not mention that in my response", he said. "Her name is Valerie."

Joe will turn 68 in November and he's married to, "the love of my life", for 45 years and 7 months as of August 8th. "I celebrate every month on the 8th day" he said.

Orduna was a Husker workhorse. He notched 28 TDs and gained 2293 Yards on the ground for the Huskers during his 3 years sporting the scarlet and cream of the Nebraska Cornhusker varsity from 1968 to 1970 while sharing the same backfield with Jeff Kinney, Jerry Tagge, Van Brownson, Dan Schneiss and others as they collected Nebraska's first national NCAA football title for Bob Devaney.

"I'm Joseph now," he told me, and I thought maybe I didn't have to ask him to explain. I told him with his permission I'd like to call him Joe for purposes of this article because this will be about his outstanding football career as a Husker and fans will remember him as the great Joe Orduna.

Of course he was okay with that.

Yes, Husker fans this is the same gentle, loving guy who decked opposing players who got in his way as he was goal-bound back in the day. Number 31. Yes Joe we remember.

Orduna was a remarkable athlete at Central High School in Omaha. He was the first sophomore in Nebraska History to break 15 seconds in the 120 yard high hurdles (15 years old at the time) and set a national record in the triple jump (45' 7") for ages 14/15. That age group was changed and is now 15/16 so the record will never be broken.

Orduna was 5 time national junior Olympic Champion in hurdles and triple jump. He was the 1966 State Champion in low hurdles, long jump and 880 relay.

Then he says after all those state and national records he held only one school record and that was the 120 yard high hurdles in 14 seconds flat and then offers this reminder: "Remember this is the school the great Gale Sayers attended".

So, Joe, how'd you end up at Nebraska?

"I came home from school one day and Coach Devaney was sitting in my living room talking to my parents. He assured my parents that he would take good care of me," Joe said.

Orduna says he absolutely loved sharing the 1970 national championship backfield with Jeff Kinney. "I never felt competitive at all. Instead I was glad we had two backs with two different styles that increased our chances of success." Joe said. Orduna put up 16 TDs that season.

Orduna counts among his better single performances as a Husker, a touchdown at Iowa State his Junior season when he became airborne

parallel to the ground over a pile of bodies and still came down on his feet for the score.

There was another scoring jaunt in 1970 of 67 yards in the Coliseum at USC after recovering from 2 knee surgeries and he finished his Husker career by scoring the first TD in the 1971 Orange Bowl vs. LSU which led to the 1970 National Championship.

Orduna became a second round draft choice of the San Francisco 49ers., moved on to the New York Giants and then on to the Baltimore Colts and had a 4 year NFL career.

After his years in the NFL he worked in sales and marketing and then in prison ministries followed with positions with McDonnell Douglas and teaching positions in the public schools before permanently retiring from the work force in 2011.

Orduna was inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame in 1990 and rests in the 72nd spot on the Omaha World Herald's list of Nebraska's 100 greatest athletes.

"Blessings upon you as you write this article," he says,. "May your readers see the goodness of God through all of it."

I sure hope so Joseph, I sure hope so.

Those of us who remember him from nearly five decades ago still call him Joe. We still see him in a pair of cleats and, oh yes, he's still number 31.

And Joe, we haven't forgotten you were one of the headliners on Nebraska's first of 5 national championships. You might be Joseph now but you were Joe to us back then.

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